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China

CHINA TOURISM

ALONG THE COAST OF LIAONING

TUNBAO PEOPLE IN GUIZHOU

TWO DAYS AT SOINAMDAGYI NATURE RESERVE STATION

274

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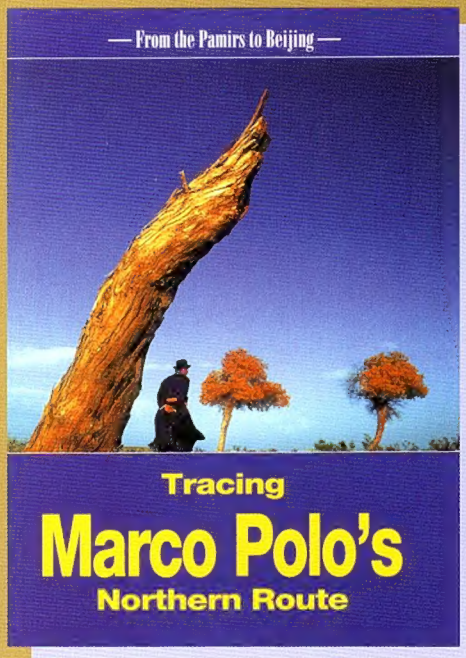

Before you set off for your perfect journey, you may have to prepare your itinerary carefully. Each of the following recommended readings offers different types of information which cater to our readers' various interests: exploring, photography, or tourist information. They will be great guides to your China tours.

Tracing Marco Polo's Northern Route

A record of an 80-day journey in which our authors drive their jeep 12,000 km long through the northern regions of China following in the footsteps of Macro Polo's historic journey from the Pamir Highland to Beijing. In a medley of images and words, we present you with the fascinating scenery and various ways of life in Xinjiang, Qinghai, Gansu, Ningxia, Inner Mongolia, and Tibet.

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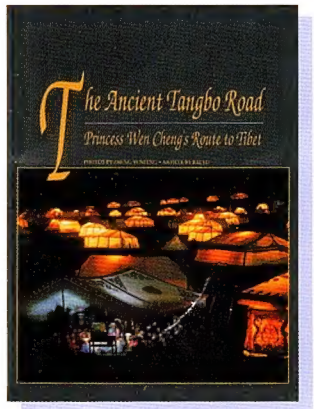

The Ancient Tangbo Road

Covering four provinces including Shaanxi, Gansu, Qinghai, and the Tibet Autonomous Region, the ancient Tangbo Road was created on the map when Princess Wen Cheng was sent as a bride to Luoxie (present-day Lhasa) during the Tang Dynasty. Our photographers and writers, who have followed this arduous route, present you the graceful sights and unique ethnic customs on the way.

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In Search of the Ancient Tea Caravan Route

The ancient Tea Caravan Route can be traced back to 2,000 years ago, starting from Xishuangbanna at China's southwestern end, passing through boundless forests and valleys to the Sino-Indian, Nepalese and Sikkimese borders on Tibet, the "Roof of the World". This book is not-to-be-missed by every daring adventurer.

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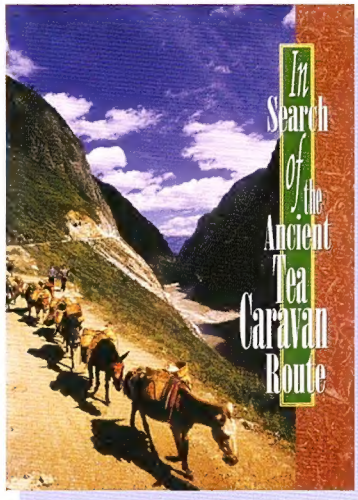

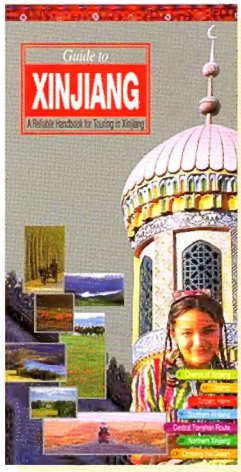

Guide to Xinjiang

This book is especially designated for DIY travellers who desire to explore the Xinjiang Uygur Autonomous Region. There are detailed introduction to scenic spots in five main areas in Xinjiang including Urümqi, Turpan, Southern and Northern Xinjiang, and Central Tianshan. Practical tourist information on accommodation, ticketing, shopping, local specialty, as well as travel tips are covered.

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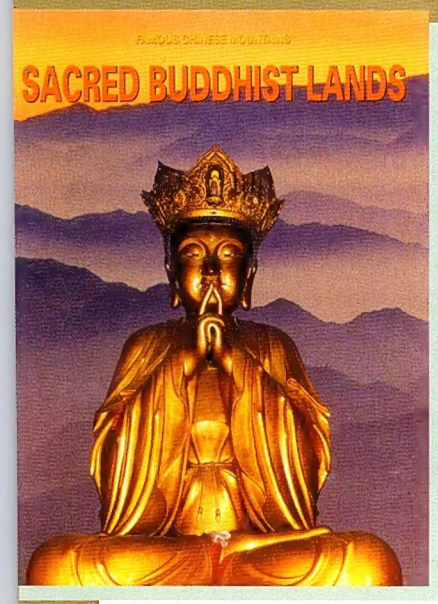

Sacred Buddhist Lands

Buddhism in China is inevitably linked with some of the country's best known mountains. And going deep in the mountains and far away from civilization is an ideal place for retreat. Belonging to the four Bodhisattvas respectively, the four most famous Buddhist mountains — Wutai, Jiuhua, Putuo and Emei — are nestled with numerous monasteries and nunneries which have been worshipped by pilgrims for thousands of years. Tourists to these places will totally be soaked in "Kingdoms of Buddhism".

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The Five Sacred Mountains The Yellow Mountain

Located in five provinces in China, every of the Five Sacred Mountains — Taishan, Hengshan, Songshan, Hengshan and Huashan — has its magnificent natural and cultural landscapes. Besides, Huangshan (Yellow Mountain), is also famous for its spectacular rocks, pine trees, and sea of clouds. It will be a great enjoyment in reading both the detailed text and remarkable images by our experienced photographers as recorded in this book.

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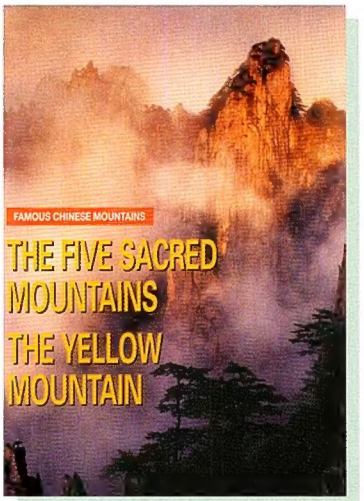

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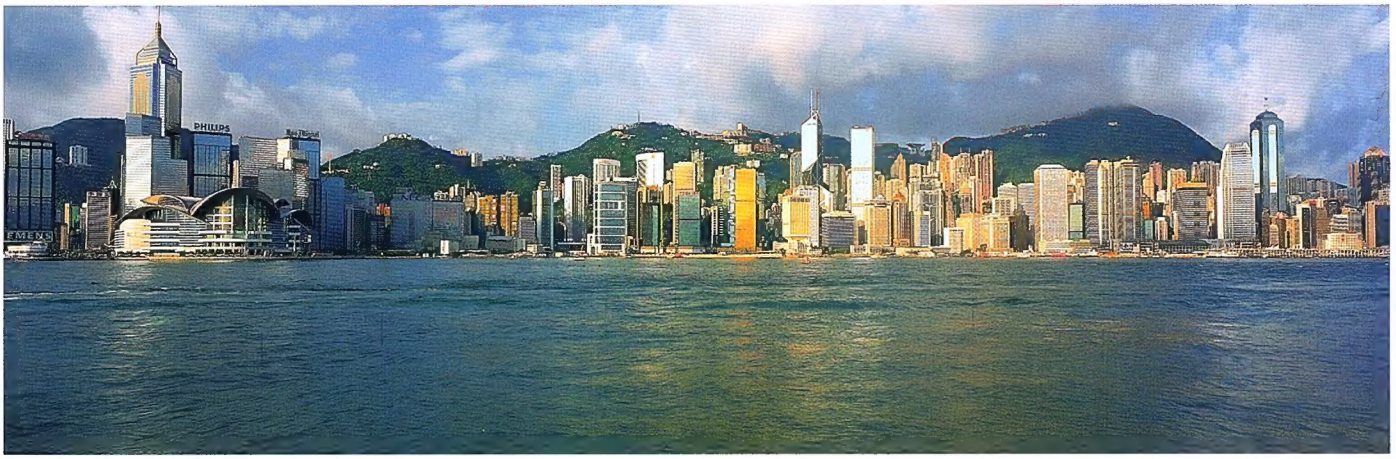

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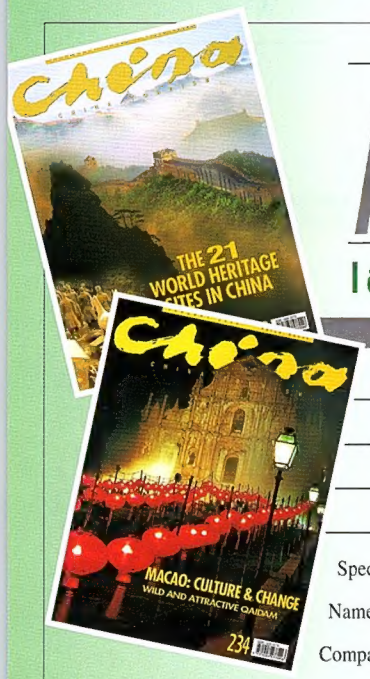

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A Journey Along the Coast of Liaoning
Photos & article by Xie Guanghui, Dong Weining
The three provinces in Northeast China, Jilin, Heilongjiang, and Liaoning, own abundant natural resources as well as exotic cultures reflecting influences from Inner Mongolia, Korea, and Russia. However, Liaoning Province boasts the best landscapes, with a coastline of 3,000 km. Though the province had been a battlefield when Japan and Russia invaded China during the late Qing Dynasty, Dalian and Lushun, have yet become the most famous tourist cities in Liaoning today. And Dandong located at the mouth of the Yalujiang River is the largest border city in China. Along the coast of Liaoning, you will surely be soaked in a delightful travelling journey.

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Tunbao People Descended from Frontier Soldiers
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Because the need to protect the environment at the source of the Yangtse River does not allow a moment's hesitation, many people work as volunteers at the Soinamdagyi Nature Reserve Station unconditionally, and have their lives changed forever...

China

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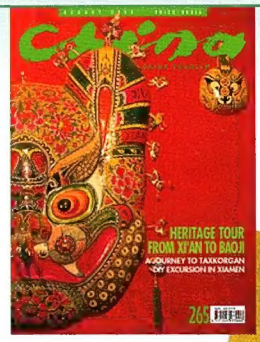

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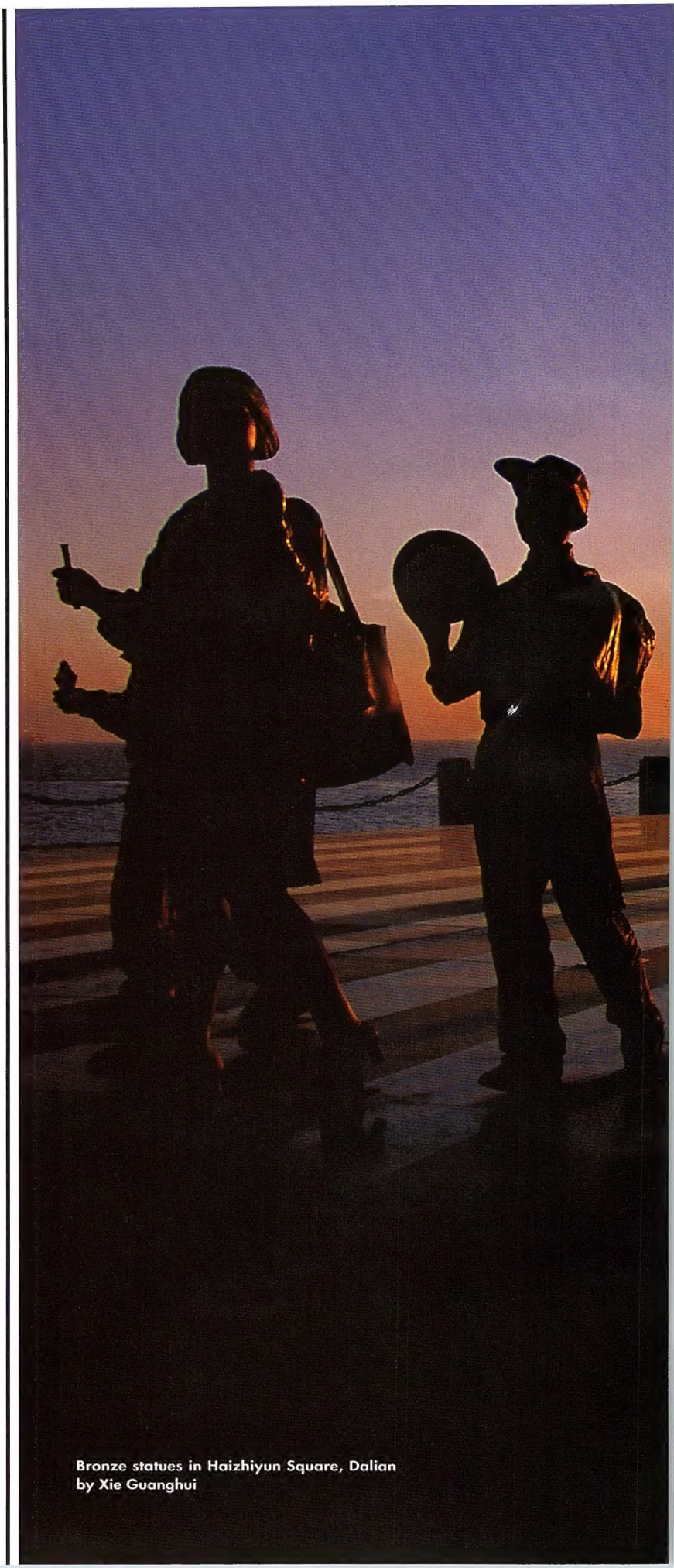


Bronze statues in Haizhiyun Square, Dalian by Xie Guanghui

FROM THE EDITOR

Far North Continued

For this month's feature story we stay in Manchuria and take a look at the winding coastline of Liaoning. If there was one province in China that could represent the vicissitudes of Chinese history then Liaoning fits the bill. The Ming Dynasty has left its heritage perhaps most notably at the stunning Jiumenkou section of the Great Wall. Early Qing Dynasty dynamism bypassed this great work but then Russian and Japanese imperialism sought to fill the vacuum left by late Qing weakness towards the end of the 19th century. The marks left by both have ultimately been incorporated into the new China as represented by the modern city of Dalian.

Equally inspirational, but on a totally different level, is the story of two young men who gave their lives in the cause of environmental protection on the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau. We only have one planet and it behoves all of us to protect and cherish the mother earth that sustains us all.

In our report on the Soinamdagyi Nature Reserve Station alongside the Golmud-Lhasa Highway there is a photograph of trucks halted while *chiru*, or Tibetan antelopes, cross the highway en route from traditional birthing grounds. Long may they continue their annual pilgrimage. And long may dedicated volunteers from throughout China work to ensure that 21st century development does not exclude the beautiful *chiru* from their rightful place in this wonderful world of ours.

May travel inspire us all to protect that world.

Exhibition Centre Planned to Be Built in Wuyishan

Wuyishan City in East China's Fujian Province is planning to invest 215 million yuan in building a research and exhibition centre to help protect and showcase the world heritage Wuyishan Mountain.

Like many famous tourist sites in China, Wuyishan, a World Cultural and Natural Heritage Site, attracts millions of visitors every year with its beautiful scenery and cultural relics. However, local officials believe that the further potential of Wuyishan still needs to be cultivated.

Therefore, a world heritage protection and exhibition centre is planned to build, which provides a stage for China's advanced cultures and other splendid cultures around the world. The centre will be divided into six parts, including a Wuyishan World Cultural Heritage protection and exhibition park, an exhibition park of the World Cultural and Natural Heritage sites around the globe, a Great Wuyi cultural classics exhibition park, a park focusing on Fujian's cultural classics, a cultural tourism service centre, and the monitoring and exchange centre for the World Heritage protection.

The centre would bring about 5,000 new jobs and enhance the healthy development of relevant industries like tourism and hotels, so as to "play better cultural cards to promote protection and tourism in the area."

Guangzhou Zoo to Build Asia's Largest Butterfly Hall

Starting in May, the Guangzhou Zoo will start to construct a comprehensive exhibition hall of invertebrates, a 2,000-square-metre butterfly pavilion, expected to be Asia's largest one of its kind. Visitors will be able to enjoy close contact with butterflies rather than simply observe them from behind a glass window.

More than 1,000 rare specimens from across the globe will be on display. Another 1,000 butterflies of dozens of varieties, mainly from Hainan Province, will find a new home there, and the number is expected to increase between 5,000 and 6,000 by this summer.

Special air conditions in the hall will enable tourists to observe the butterflies during the winter. The zoo will use nylon rather than glass to ensure good ventilation. An artificial landscape including a three-metre waterfall will be built and nectar-producing plants will be planted in the hall.

Tianjin Expected to Become Greener

Designing to improve the local environment and raise the living quality of the residents, Tianjin Municipal Government has launched an afforestation campaign. It is estimated that the tree coverage in and around the city will reach 40 percent and grass coverage come up to 35 percent by the year of 2010.

Statistic show that by 2002, the forest coverage in Tianjin, the largest port city in North China, was 27.3 percent while the grass coverage was 19.1 percent.

Shenzhen to Extend Subways

A panel of experts in Shenzhen, the Special Economic Zone in Guangdong Province, has approved a proposal to extend the length of two constructing metro lines in order to connect two major industrial centres in the city. The extended subway will be half underground and half elevated above-ground.

According to the proposal, the metro, line 1 will be extended from the downtown with 15 stations to reach the Shenzhen International Airport in Bao'an, a major industrial district in Shenzhen. The metro, line 4 will be prolonged to reach Longhua, another major industrial base, with a total length of 16 km and nine stations. The two subway lines were originally designed to circle inside Shenzhen only.

Museum to Protect Dadiwan Ruins

Located at the Qingshui River Valley and the hillside on the southern bank of the river, the Dadiwan Ruins cover an area stretching for 1.1 million square metres. China plans to build a museum at the ancient Dadiwan ruins in northwestern Gansu Province to better protect relics unearthed at the site.

The museum will cover a floor space of 1,500 square metres exhibiting unearthed relics from the ruins, dating back 5,000 to 8,000 years. As told by the China Architect Designing Institute, visitors will have a chance to see ancient villages, rivers and natural scenes outside the museum.

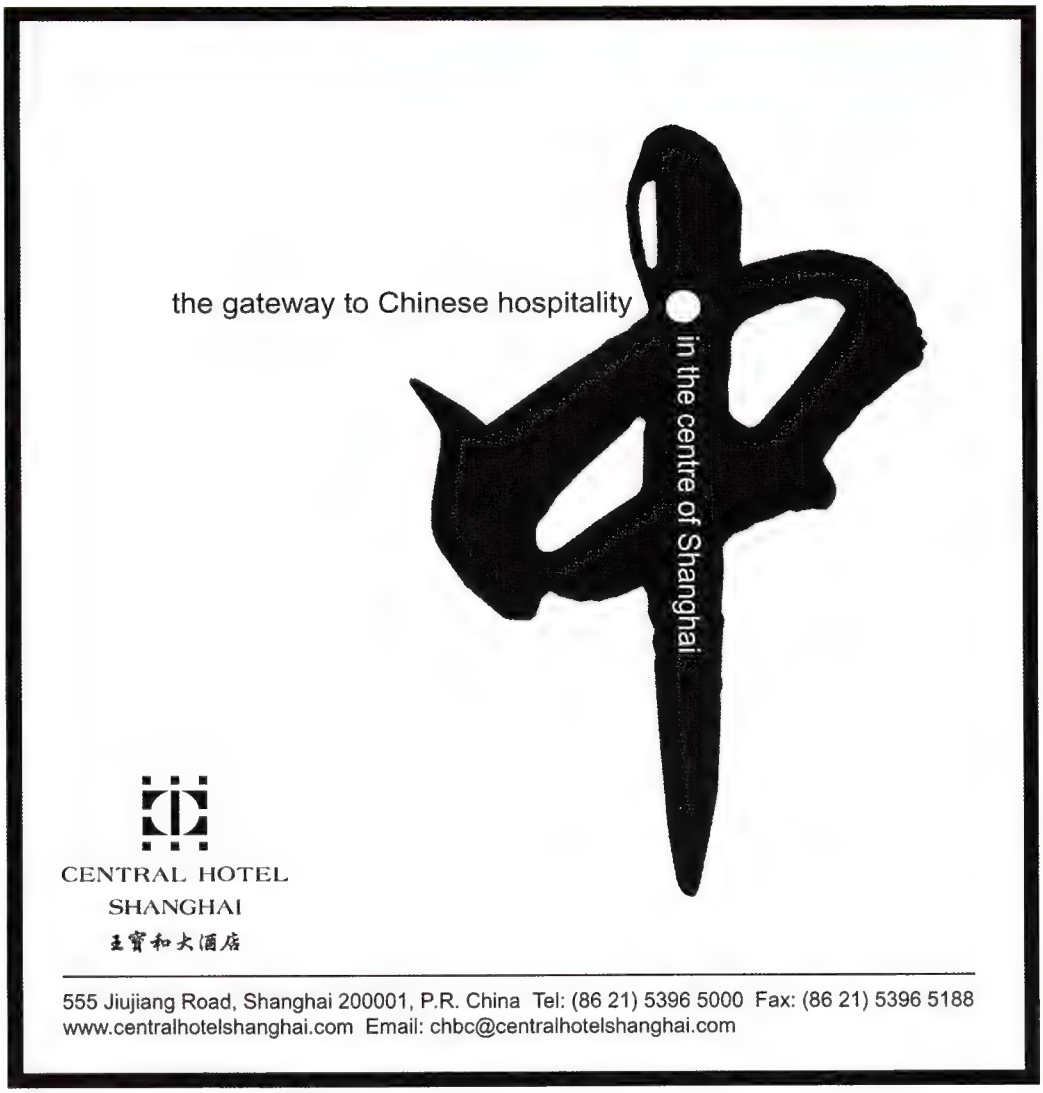
Over the past 20 years, Chinese archaeologists have excavated China's earliest painting, writing, coloured pottery, crop seed strain specimen and buildings from Dadiwan, showing the development from a rural to an urban society. A large number of stove ruins, ash pits, tombs, kilns and ditches, as well as pottery ware, stone tools and animal skeletons have also been unearthed. All these discoveries are 1,000 to 2,000 years older than previous similar archaeological discoveries in other parts of China. This suggests that the age of China's civilization might be longer than the orthodox 5,000 years.

Dalai's Summer Palace to Be Renovated

With a budget of 60 million yuan, the renovation work on Norbu Lingka — the Dalai Lama's summer palace, has started in the western suburbs of Lhasa, the capital city of the Tibet Autonomous Region.

Built in 1751 by the 7th Dalai Lama, Norbu Lingka covering 360,000 square metres is the largest palace garden in Tibet. Every year from March to October, the successive Dalai Lamas returned to Norbu Lingka from Potala Palace to perform administrative and religious duties. The complex was included on the World Cultural Heritage list in 2001.

The renovation project, to be completed in 2004, is being carried out by two architectural firms from Suzhou in Jiangshu Province and Lhasa respectively. The Norbu Lingka project is one of three renovation projects on cultural relic architectures. The other two projects are the Potala Palace and the Sakya Monastery.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DIY Travel Tips for Visiting Earthen Towers and Shooting Lotus

Fujian/ Guangdong What can be done in a three-day vacation? Why not visiting the "Tulou" (earthen towers) of the Hakka people in Yongding and Nanjing counties in western Fujian Province and the Lotus World in Sanshui in Foshan City, Guangdong Province? Here is the itinerary for such a marvelous trip:

Tourists can take a night train from Shenzhen to Yongding. The train will arrive Yongding before seven in the next morning. Take a passenger motorcycle to the bus terminus for about three minutes. Take a bus to Xiayang Town. Duration: about 1 hour. On arrival to the town, hire a motorcycle to the earthen towers.

First, pay a visit to the Yonglongzhai and Yongkang Tower in Xiacun Village. Owned by the Hu Family, Yongkang Tower is simple and unadorned. Afterwards, head to the Chuxi Earthen Towers District. A panorama of the district can be viewed from an observation terrace there. The earthen towers in this district, built in the shapes of circle or square, witness a history of more than 180 years, but still have maintained the original appearance.

After lunch, go on visiting the earthen towers in Hukeng and Gaotou. Since the residences in this area are quite famous, they appear very commercialized. The exterior scenery around the Hekeng Earthen Towers District is very attractive. In the Tianluokeng Earthen Towers District in Nanjing County, there are circular, square, and oval earthen towers situated at the foot of the mountains. Admission to the district: 15 yuan. Bus time: about 1 hour.

Afterwards, return to Yongding by taking the last bus at Xiayang Town. Since the last bus departs at about 16:20, one has to give up shooting other scenes on the way. If you really want to extend the shooting time, you may hire a car and ask the driver to go directly to Yongding railway station. And take the train 2282 at midnight to Guangzhou East Station.

The morning is not an ideal time to take pictures of lotus. Tourists can tour around Foshan by taking a bus. After lunch, take another bus to Xinan Terminus in Sanshui, and change bus No. 9 to reach the entrance of the Lotus World. Take a short rest in the Lotus World Hotel, and go photographing lotus in the garden until about seven o'clock in the evening.

On the next morning, tourists can grasp the time to take more photos. Enter the garden about five o'clock in the morning and shoot the lotus and lilies until the check out time at 13:00. Take a taxi to the Xinan Terminus. Fare: about 12 yuan. Then, take a luxurious express bus from Sanshui to Shenzhen which departs at 13: 00. Fare: 80 yuan.

* For more information about the earthen towers in Fujian, please refer to "Magic Country Fortresses: Houses of Rammed Earth" in *China Tourism* Issue 247.

(photos & text by Liang Zhiwen)

Eight New Flights to Japan Launched

Aviation The Northern Company of the China Southern Air Holding Company initiated eight new flights to Japan recently as part of its new flight schedule.

With the eight new additions, the company, formerly China Northern Airlines, now operates 33 flights a week on 12 routes to Japan, including flights from Shenyang to Tokyo, Shenyang to Osaka, Shenyang to Sapporo, Shenyang to Fukuoka, Dalian to Tokyo, Dalian to Osaka, Dalian to Tomiyama, Dalian to Tomioka, Dalian to Nagoya, Changchun to Sendai, Harbin to Niigata and, Harbin to Dalian to Hiroshima.

All flights depart from China's northeast area: Shenyang, capital city of Liaoning Province; Dalian, a port city in the same province; Harbin, capital of Heilongjiang Province; and Changchun, capital of Jilin Province.

Passenger volume between Japan and the three northeastern Chinese provinces has increased in recent years, commensurate with the growth of trade and exchanges between the two countries.

Great Wall Museum Built

Liaoning A museum on the Great Wall has been set up on the site of the easternmost section of this world-renowned architectural wonder. The museum, the fourth of its kind, is located at Hushan in Dandong City in Northeast China's Liaoning Province and mainly reflects the history of the Great Wall's defensive role.

Exhibits on display include ancient weapons, stoves used by guards and other relics unearthed from the original site of the Hushan stretch of the Great Wall. The eastern end of the Great Wall had always been believed to start from Shanhaiguan in Hebei Province until the 1980s when archaeologists found the remains of a 600-metre long section at Hushan. Construction of the museum started last year after the wall remains were repaired. The museum is expected to open for the public on May 1.

Entrance Fees to Shisanling Scenic Area Increased

Beijing Four of the 13 mausoleums in the Shisanling Scenic Area, a renowned heritage site of the Ming Dynasty built for the past emperors, including Dingling, Changling, Zhaoling, and Shendao, have raised their entrance fees. The new costs for adult tourists are as follows: Slack season (November 1 to March 31) ~ Dingling 40 yuan, Changling 30 yuan, Zhaoling 20 yuan, Shendao (Divine Way) 20 yuan; Peak season (April 1 to October 31) ~ Dingling 60 yuan, Changling 45 yuan, Zhaoling 30 yuan, and Shendao 30 yuan.

Remarks: The Tian'anmen Gate located in Beijing centre has also been closed for renovation until April 30.

Appreciating Flowers in Gongkeng Temple in Xinhui

Guangdong Built between the end of Song and at the beginning of Yuan dynasties, the Gongkeng Temple (also known as Tiancheng Temple) is located on the Lesser Penglai Hill in Anxicun Village, Tongjingxiang Township, Tangxia Town. It is 13 km south of Jiangmen city area, and 22 km southwest of the county seat of Xinhui, Guangdong Province. A strange kind of flower which looks like a sparrow grows in the temple, hence its name Hequehua (Sparrow Flower). Legend says that the first seed of the flower was brought by a monk who came to the temple during the Ming Dynasty.

The size of a "Sparrow Flower" is more or less than a sparrow, and they are usually appear in strings on the trees, as if thousands of sparrows resting on the trees. According to local farmers, the flowers run to seeds once every 30 years. The seeds are as big as bean pod and are eatable. While the flowers are also sweet and fresh, and can be made into dishes or soup. Besides, it can be used as Chinese herb after drying.

April to May is the best time to appreciate the "Sparrow Flowers" when there will always be a thin layer of mist on the mountain, creating poetic flavour.

Transport: There are three passenger ferries running between Hong Kong and Jiangmen everyday at 9:00, 13:30, and 16:45. Tickets include HK$250 (super class), HK$230 (first class) and HK$220 (standard). There are direct buses from Hong Kong to Jiangmen, which cost up from HK$100 for a single trip.

(photo & text by Feng Yaohua)

Wildlife Breeding Centre Opens

Shaanxi Costing a total of more than 985,000 yuan to build, the Qinling Mountain Range Wildlife Breeding Centre has been set up in Foping County in northwestern Shaanxi Province. It covers an area of five hectares, with 1,834 square metres of floor space has been built for farming and wildlife shelters.

The breeding centre will be a comprehensive development project featuring animal husbandry, hunting, breeding, researches and observation. It will mainly breed and raise wildlife such as masked civet, the black bear, roe deer, boar, deer and giant salamanders.

Executive Salon
行政沙龙

The 18th to 22nd floors are executive floors. An executive salon can be found at the 18th floor. As an "imbedded restaurant", the salon claims reception room, dining hall and small business center to provide the following services:

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*Free fax receiving.
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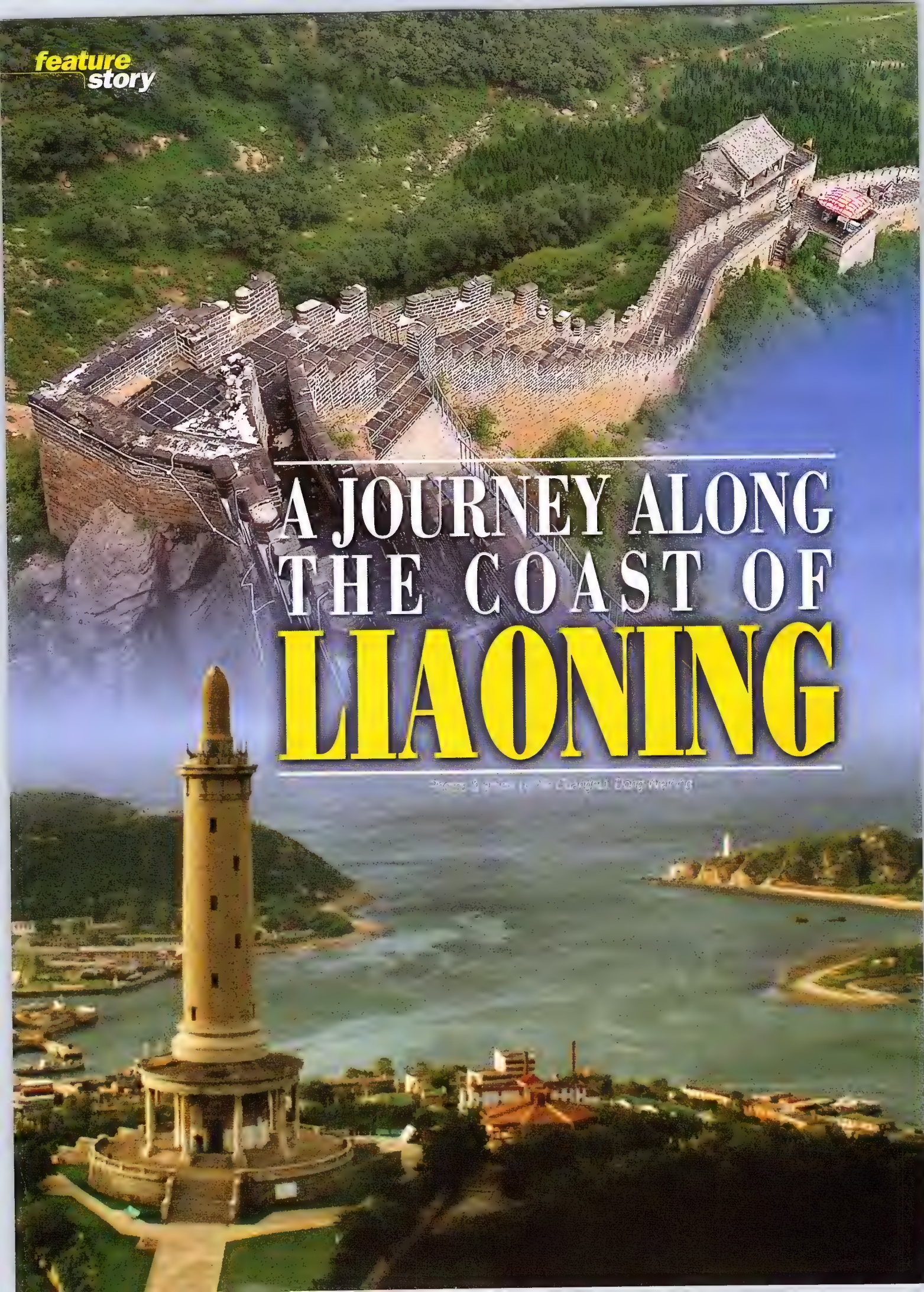


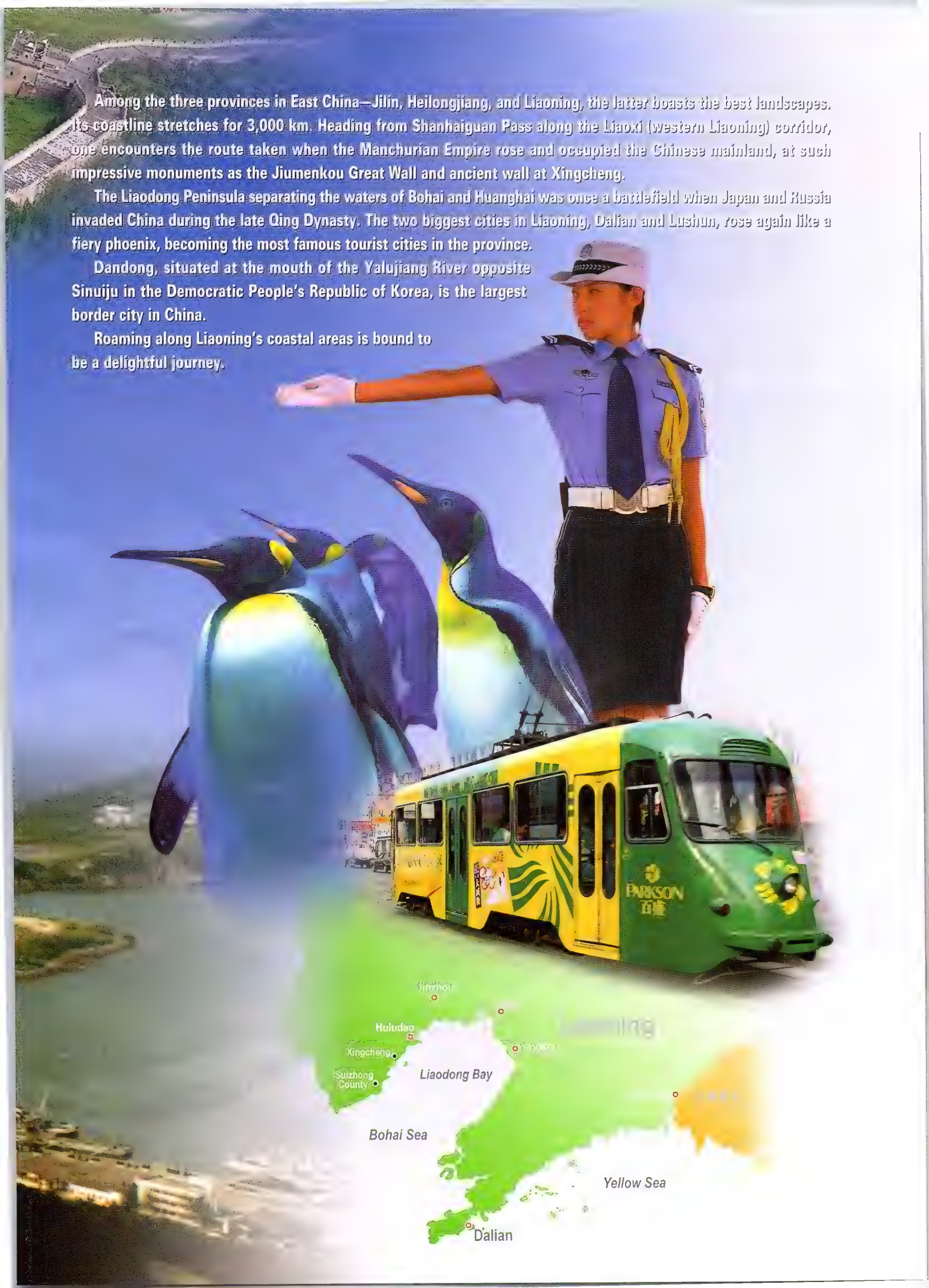
A JOURNEY ALONG THE COAST OF LIAONING

Among the three provinces in East China—Jilin, Heilongjiang, and Liaoning, the latter boasts the best landscapes. Its coastline stretches for 3,000 km. Heading from Shanhaiguan Pass along the Liaoxi (western Liaoning) corridor, one encounters the route taken when the Manchurian Empire rose and occupied the Chinese mainland, at such impressive monuments as the Jiumenkou Great Wall and ancient wall at Xingcheng.

The Liaodong Peninsula separating the waters of Bohai and Huanghai was once a battlefield when Japan and Russia invaded China during the late Qing Dynasty. The two biggest cities in Liaoning, Dalian and Lushun, rose again like a fiery phoenix, becoming the most famous tourist cities in the province.

Dandong, situated at the mouth of the Yalujiang River opposite Sinuiju in the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, is the largest border city in China.

Roaming along Liaoning's coastal areas is bound to be a delightful journey.



REDISCOVERING DALIAN

A century ago Dalian city tasted the bitter experience of invasion by Japan and Russia.

A few years back, the smart mayor of Dalian drew flocks of female reporters.

Today, everyone agrees Dalian is a westernized, super tourist city, where cool mounted policewomen patrol...

STROLLING IN THE CITY

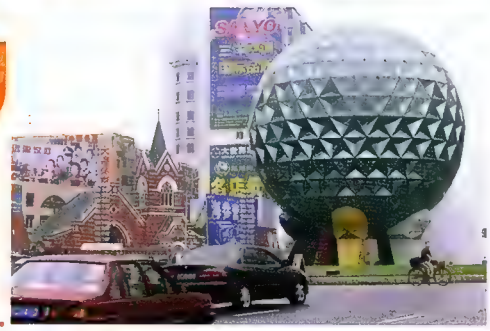
People's Square
The Heart of the City

There are more than 70 squares in Dalian, more than in any other city in China. The People's Square, located beside Zhongshan Road, is up made of four large lawns, each with an area of 10,000 square metres. A European-style musical fountain backed by a marble wall graces the northern part of the square. When water soars up in the early morning sun creating dazzling rainbows and elderly men and women perform the *yangge* dance nearby, it's an uplifting sight. The municipal government building stands to the north of the square.

Transport: Bus No. 11 or 24

Friendship Square
Symbol of Sino-Russian Friendship

The Crystal Ball on the central lawn at the Zhongshan Road intersection is a landmark structure of the square. When evening falls, a total of 7,852 lamps throw out intermittent beams of red, yellow and green colours. The Friendship Square was named to commemorate the friendship between China and Russia.



Dalian Car Fair
A Galaxy of Cars and Beauties

After Beijing and Shanghai, the Dalian Car Fair is the third largest on mainland China. It is held annually in the Xinghai International Convention Centre. Dalian boasts the greatest number of global brand motor vehicles in the northeast. As always at such shows, there are galaxies of beautiful girls.

- Add: 18 Huizhan Road, Shahekou
- Transport: Bus No. 16, 22, 23, 202, 406, 801, or K901

Russian Street
Colourful European World

Cross the Victory Bridge (Shengliqiao) and you will come to a Russian-style street. The oldest street in the city has been rebuilt so it looks as it did when it was first developed over 100 years ago. There are more than 20 buildings with Russian and European architecture along the 400-metre street. Shops sell all sorts of foreign souvenirs. The exotic atmosphere is like being in a foreign country.

■ Transport: Bus No. 203, 403, or 706

Xinghai Square
New Version of Cinderella

This is Dalian's newest and largest square. At the northern end of the square by the coast stands a sculpture of 100 footprints, representing the city's 100-year-old history. In the past, this area used to be a rubbish dump but now has become one of the city's commercial districts.

■ Transport: Bus No. 14, 18, 27, 16, 22, 23, 202, 406, 801, or K901

Harbour Square
Sculpture Honours Chinese Fleet

Sited the east end of Renmin Road, this square is next to Dalian Harbour. The nine-masted boat surrounded by fountains in the central lawn is modeled on a ship of Zheng He's fleet which sailed the oceans in the Ming Dynasty.

- Transport: Bus No. 27, 501 or 524

Labour Park
Full of Fan Dancers

The Laodong (Labour) Park in downtown Dalian covering 1.02 million square metres, is an ideal place for locals to enjoy the cool air in summer evenings and work at physical exercises in the morning. At dawn every day, lots of people shadow box, practise swordplay or jog there. But the most popular activity is fan dancing. Accompanied by music, people dance to entertain themselves while exercising to keep fit.

- Admission: 5 yuan
- Transport: Bus No. 24 or 11

A Street Snapshot

A Woman Motorbike Rider Outside a Net Cafe

The internet cafe is a symbol of the information age. The motorbike is a popular means of transport. In Dalian today, and both are hot favourites with young people.

EXCURSIONS IN SUBURBS

Polar Aquarium
From Penguins to Sea Elephants

The Polar Aquarium at the Laohutan (Tiger Beach) Scenic Area opened for business only last year. More than 150 marine animals from 11 species are on display at its Polar Hall and Marine Creatures Hall. Of all the aquariums worldwide, this is the largest with the greatest number of animals from polar areas, as certified by the *Guinness Book of Records*. Visitors can see polar bears, penguins, white whales, sea elephants and more, and watch their excellent performances at the aquarium that is open all year round.

- Admission: Polar Hall 90 yuan, Marine Creatures Hall 30 yuan, flat ticket 110 yuan.
- Tel: (411) 2893111/ 2893000
- Transport: Bus No. 402, 2 or 801

Hutan Fishermen's Wharf
No Ordinary Theme Park

This small theme park is designed in the shape of a European pirate ship. The boat has two decks dotted with cement sculptures of sailors, which look lifelike and vivid. Almost 100 seals frolic in a huge pool in the cabin, making the theme park even more attractive.

- Transport: Bus No. 402, 2, or 801

Forest and Wildlife Park
Close Encounter with Animals

Visitors have to ride in a truck to see such wild animals as giraffes, Asian elephants, monkeys, lions, tigers, South African antelopes, black-spotted antelopes and takin in the mountain valleys of the park.

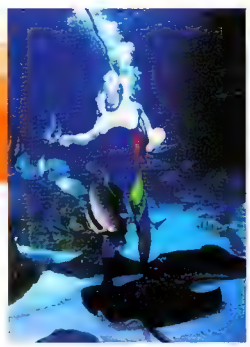
- Admission: 60 yuan
- Transport: The terminal for Bus No. 407 is fairly close to the northern entrance of the park. It is recommended to take an observation trolley to reach the centre of the park. The southern entrance is at the west end of Binhai Road, and you can get there by taking a taxi or Bus No. 801, which runs around the city.

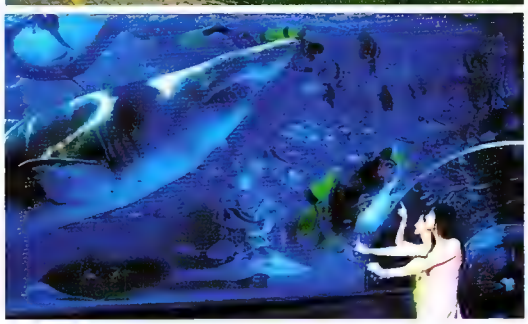
(by Liaoning Tourism Bureau)

A Tale from the Park:

Two years ago, a mother tiger who had just given birth to a cub was traumatised by lightning and a clap of thunder one stormy night. As a result, her milk dried up and she refused to recognize her own cub which almost starved to death. Luckily, at that time a dog kept by the janitor gave birth to two puppies. So an attendant at the park took the cub to this dog but it refused to let the cub suckle. The attendant blindfolded the dog with a piece of cloth and in this way, the dog suckled the cub as well as her own puppies. Six months later, the cub had grown into a big fellow. However, it greatly respected the mother dog and treated the other two puppies as brothers.

Shengya Marine World
Asia's Top Arch Viewing Tunnel





Located in the Xinghai Park, the Shengya Marine World, the first submarine tunnel aquarium in China, was opened for the public in 1995. It has a 118-metre arch-top viewing tunnel — the longest of its kind in Asia. Visitors can appreciate more than 200 species comprising over 10,000 fishes, as well as the fantastic ocean world inside. There are also coral fish and warships model exhibition rooms. During the winter holidays, the Marine World will host the "Ocean Knowledge Seminar" to give lectures on sailing, submarines, and oceanic geology, etc. It is now planning to extend the exhibition hall of polar region.

- Opening hours: Summer 8:30~17:00/ Winter: 9:00~16:00
- Admission: 70 yuan
- Tel: (411) 4685213
- Transport: Bus No. 22, 23, 28, 203, 406, or 801

Haizhiyun Square
Best Place for Viewing Sunrise

Haizhiyun (Rhythm of Sea) Square is at the northern end of Binhai Road. The principal sculpture in the park is a structure of five steel pipes. If you walk along Binhai Road, you can see sculptures of primitive totems, realistic or exaggerated images of wooden railings, 13 ancient warships.... The bustling downtown and the tranquil seaside blend happily. But something you must do is to watch the sunrise at the square.

■ Transport: Bus No. 7, 24, 31 or 203, then change to 402 at Siergou

Jinshitan Martial Arts Hall
Tourists are Always Welcome

The martial arts building featuring ancient Chinese architecture contains a practice hall, a training hall, a rest room and shower rooms. This is the largest single building for practising martial arts in China. Activities held here are primarily international or domestic martial arts competitions, performances, exchanges and training.

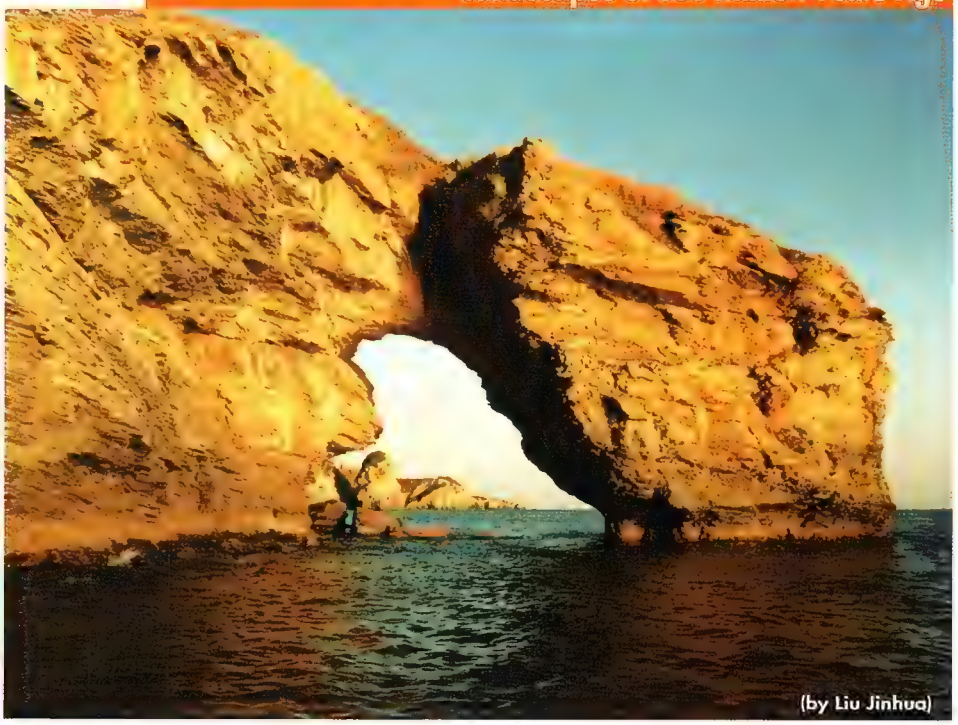
■ Note: Martial Arts Shows are arranged specially for tourists at weekend or public holidays

Jinshitan Strange Rocks Park
Landscapes of 600 Million Years Ago

The star attractions of Strange Rocks Park were discovered purely by accident. Seven years ago, it was decided to build a hotel on the site of the present park, when a huge bizarre golden-coloured rock was excavated during the construction. So the government decided to stop construction and began digging deeper instead. After a couple of years, a group of sea-eroded rocks of the Sinian era had emerged that date back 600 million years. A rare geological find for both research and education.

■ Admission: 10 yuan Tel: (411) 7900241

■ Opening hours: 8:00~17:30 (allow about half an hour for a visit)



(by Liu Jinhua)

Jinshitan Golf Course
Putting by the Sea

This 18-hole golf course is situated on Jinshitan (Golden Rock Beach) at the southern end of the Liaodong Peninsula. Renowned golf course designer Peter Thomson made full use of the terrain for this course. The putting green is close to the sea, which is surprisingly stimulating. Seven of its fairways have been listed among the best 100 in the world. The most challenging is the seventh, which is also known as the "Devil Fairway" or the "First Fairway Under Heaven".

- Add: Jinshi Beach Int'l Tourist Villa
- Tel: (411) 7900060
- Transport: Tourists can take a light railway going from Xianglutan to Jinshitan. Duration: 40 mins. Ticket: 20 yuan. The route will stretch to the Dalian Railway Station by the end of 2003.
- Note: The Jinshitan Golf Club exercises a membership system. A non-member must book in advance.

Mao Zedong Badges Gallery
Back to the Red Revolutionary Era

More than 80,000 badges of 30,000 designs covering the period from 1945 to 1993 are displayed in 1,200 square metres of exhibition halls. Some are placed on tables, others in glass cases or hung on the walls. A picture of "the east is red and the sun rises" made out of 20,000 badges is most eye-catching. Those badges were collected over a long period of time by Mr. Cheng De of Dandong City.

- Admission: 5 yuan
- Add: 2/F, Shangshi Guan (Stone Appreciation Hall) at Jinshitan
- Opening hours: 8:00~16:30
- Transport: (same as above)

SKETCHES OF DALIAN

Trams with Clanging Bells

As it emerges from among the tower blocks of a bustling city, an antique tram with clanging bell takes one back to the old days. Hong Kong's double-decker trams in typical Victorian style instantly come to mind. But the Dalian tram is a single deck vehicle. Though renovated many times, it still reminds one of Japanese tramcars.

Dalian is the only city in China able to manufacture trams and has the longest mileage of tram rails and the greatest passenger capacity. There used to be three independent tram routes — No. 201, 202 and 203. But not long ago, No. 202 was converted into a light rail. If you want a nostalgia trip then get on a route 203 tram at the Jiuzhou Ramada International stop near the Dalian Railway Station. Sit on the hard wooden seat, lower the wooden framed window, or stand in the wooden cabin, hold a ring unique to trams and hear the clanging sound of the bell, and a feeling of nostalgia will sweep over you. The best way to prolong this feeling is to get off at the next stop (Shengliqiao, or Victory Bridge). Looking north, you can see a red-and-white building, Dalian Art Museum, behind the bridge. That is the starting point of the Russian Street. As you enter this street, more surprises await you.

Three Tram Routes:

- No. 201 (First tram: 4:25 Last tram: 0:05 Fare: 1 yuan)
Route: Dalian Railway Station – Dongguanjie – Shichangjie – Beijingjie – Datongjie – Wuyi Guangchang – Zhengongjie – Xinggongjie – Shahekou Railway Station
- No. 202 (First tram: 4:20 Last tram: 23:50 Fare: 2 yuan)
Route: Heshijiao – Xinghai Park – Yike Daxue (Medical University) – Huawusuo – Xinghai Square – Conference & Exhibition Centre – Fuguojie – Gongchengjie – Jiefang Square – Guangrong Plaza – Xinggongjie (This route has been changed into a light railway)
- No. 203 (First tram: 4:15 Last tram: 0:05 Fare: 1 yuan)
Route: Dalian Railway Station – Shengliqiao – Minshengjie – Minzhu Square – Shijijie – Sanba Square – Erqi Square – Siergou

Policewomen Cavalry

At 9:30 every morning, a container truck pulls up at the People's Square. Out come three tall policewomen, each with a sabre at the waist and leading a dark brown horse. The three horses are so tall and robust they dwarf the women, who are over 1.7 metres tall. Then they mount and begin trotting towards the square in a column. These horses are retired from the Hong Kong Jockey Club. Though rather aged, they are pure English breeds. Less aggressive and more steady now, they still have a stately air about them when walking in the streets. The policewomen patrolling on horseback have become quite a sight in Dalian.

The Dalian Policewomen Cavalry was founded in 1994. The first of its kind in China, it comprises 30 to 40 horses. The policewomen on horseback patrol around the square three times every morning. Tourists may take pictures with them in front of the fountain at the southern end of the square. If you miss that opportunity, you can visit the cavalry's training ground, which has an area of 30,000 square metres. There you will see the policewomen and their horses train. There is also a performance by patrolling motorcycles.

- Add: Southern part of the People's Square
- Time: 9:30~10:30 (except during rain or snow, or when ceremonies for foreign VIPs are due)
- Address of the Training Ground: Zhongnan Road, Zhongshan District (closed during rain or snow, or to hold ceremonies for foreign VIPs)
- Admission: 20 yuan
- Tel: (411) 2883866

THE LATER THE BETTER

Oriana Cruise Theme Park

Luxury Entertainment

The mighty Oriana, measuring 260 metres in length, 53 metres high and with a beam o[illegible] was launched in [illegible] with a displacement of 42,000 tons and capacity for 3,000 passengers. It was Britain's largest and the most expensive passenger liner after the Queen Elizabeth 2. In its day it visited 108 well-known ports of the world and steamed 6.5 million kilometres.

The best show aboard is the Moulin Rouge performed by the ship's theatre. Performers hail from many parts of the world. The superb stage setting and exotic performances reflect local customs and cultures of the ports were the Oriana once berthed. Sitting in a luxurious box, one can enjoy a taste of royal atmosphere.

- Add: Nanhai Bay at Xinghai Square
- Admission: 90 yuan
- Features: Moulin Rouge, song and dance ensemble performances, amusement centre, etc
- Tel: (416) 4801666
- Transport: Bus No. 22, 23, 406, 202, or 801

Neon Lights at the Victory Square

Symbol of Dalian Nights

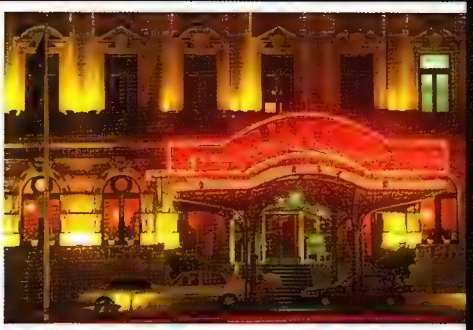
The Victory Square in front of the Dalian Railway Station features two European-style buildings and an open plaza built to an ancient Roman design. Underground is a shopping mall with three levels of brand-name stores, and exits leading to eight streets. At night, the square is ablaze with colourful neon lights.

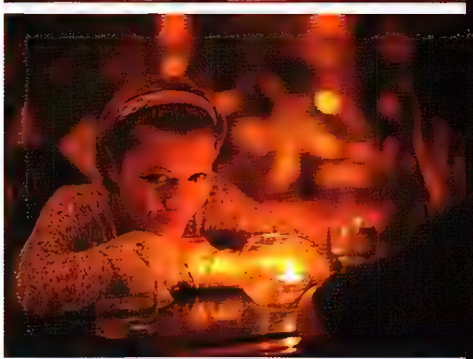
- Transport: Bus No. 101, 503, 522, 534, 405, 414, 701, 703, or 712

Nightlife in Dalian
Music and Excitement Abound

Dalian is a romantic city and its nightlife is very opulent. Almost every hotel has a nightclub. At the club on the ground floor of the Hilton, a Filipino band plays nightly. There are also Russian girls dancing for guests. The Banana Disco in the Furama Hotel is bursting with excitement. The music is thunderous, and the hall full of lingering mist which turns creamy white in the beams of the light show.

- Address of the Banana Disco: 60 Renmin Road, Zhongshan District
Average cost per head: 120 yuan
- Address of the Hilton Hotel Nightclub: 123 Changjiang Road, Zhongshan District
Average cost per head: 150 yuan





Leisure Bars
One for Everyone

It's not easy to generalise about bars in Dalian as the range is so wide. The Little Europe at the Victory Square is relaxed and comfortable. The Shishang (Fashionable) Bar on the 8th floor of the Swissotel is somewhat luxurious though the decor is simple and concise. Those tourists who are fond of music might choose the Huamandu Jazz Bar. If you like football, go to Xianjilin, a haunt for football fans. The bar street on Gorky Street is also a good place.

- Scotland Flying Man Add: B1/F Hilton Hotel Average cost per head: 120 yuan
Reserve no.: (252) 9999 5404
- Shishang Bar Add: 8/F, Swissotel Average cost per head: 100 yuan Reserve no.: (230) 3388 8856
- Banana Disco Add: 1/F, Furama Hotel Average cost per head: 80 yuan Reserve no.: 2636785
(more suitable for young people)
- Huamandu Jazz Bar Add: 6 Wuwu Road, Zhongshan District Average cost per head: 60 yuan
Reserve no.: 272 9791
- Xianjilin (Football Fan Haunt): 57 Yan'an Road Average cost per head: 60 yuan Reserve no.: 264 3555
- The bar street in Shuixian Compound: Gorky Road Average cost per head: 50 yuan

LÜSHUN – CHINESE NAVAL PORT

(by Wen Zixian)

Lüshun Port
Witness to Naval History

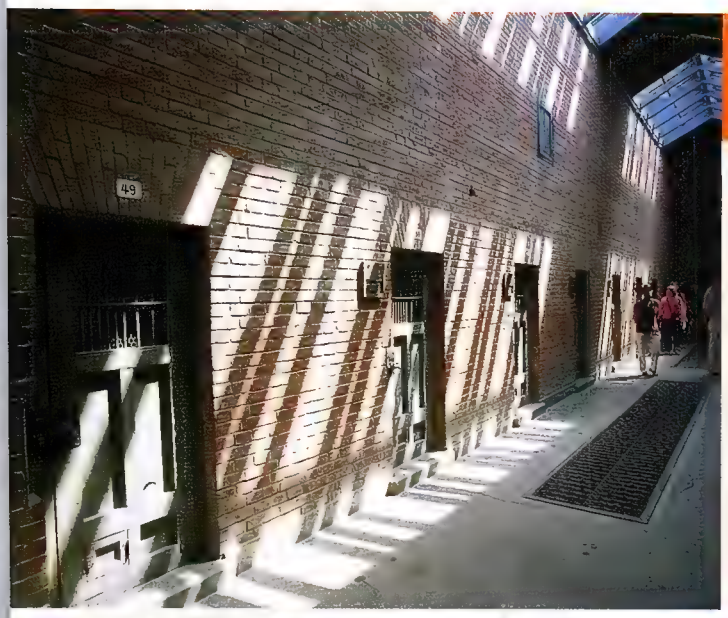
Lüshun Port lies at the southern end of the Liaoning Peninsula, where the Yellow Sea and the Bohai Sea meet. Flanked by two mountains, it is a good secure base and easy to defend. Though in the north of China, the water here never freezes in winter. In 1880, Li Hongzhang, prime minister of the Qing government, established the command centre of the Northern Fleet at Lüshun. At that time, it was one of the best-known military harbours. When the Sino-Japanese War broke out, the Northern Fleet was wiped out. Then Czarist Russia occupied Lüshun by force and moved the base for its Pacific Fleet to the harbour. In 1904, the Japanese launched a surprise attack on the harbour and took it over. Dalian was liberated in 1945 and the harbour was used jointly by China and the Soviet Union. Ten years later, the troops of the Soviet Union withdrew and the harbour was controlled by China's navy.

- Add: The end of Huanghe Road
- Admission: 5 yuan
- Note: Foreign tourists who want to enter Lüshun must first register with the Dalian Public Security Bureau. Places for foreigners to visit are limited.

Lüshun Museum
Rich in Cultural Relics

This museum is housed in a European-style building erected in 1917. Its more than 100,000 cultural relics and documentation displayed in the two exhibition halls include bronze wares, ceramics, lacquer wares, bamboo and wooden objects, carvings, paintings and calligraphy, Buddhist statues and ancient coins. The museum also has some cultural relics from Japan, Korea and Indian.

- Add: 42 Lenin Street
- Admission: 35 yuan
- Opening hours: Summer 8:30~17:00/ Winter 9:00~15:00



Russian-Japanese Prison
Escape Almost Impossible

This is the site of an international prison, which once held people from China, Russia, Japan and Korea. The grey brick section on the ground floor we can still see today was built by Russians in 1902. The red brick section on the first floor was later added to the building by the Japanese. The total area of the prison is 260,000 square metres and it held a maximum of about 2,000 people. Many attempts to escape occurred but only one succeeded. Few people ever got away.

- Add: 139 Xiangyang Street
- Admission: 15 yuan
- Opening hours: 8:00~17:00

Lüshun Railway Station
A Century-old Station

This railway station used to be the terminus of the Nanman Railway built when Lüshun was ruled by Czarist Russia. The line extends 61 km from Dalian to Lüshun. The waiting room is all made from wood. The white walled and green roofed building is in imitation Gothic style. It still functions today a century later, and is the best-preserved European-style structure among all the railways in the northeast of China.

- Transport: A train leaves from Dalian for Lüshun every morning and returns at midday. A single trip takes about two and a half hours.

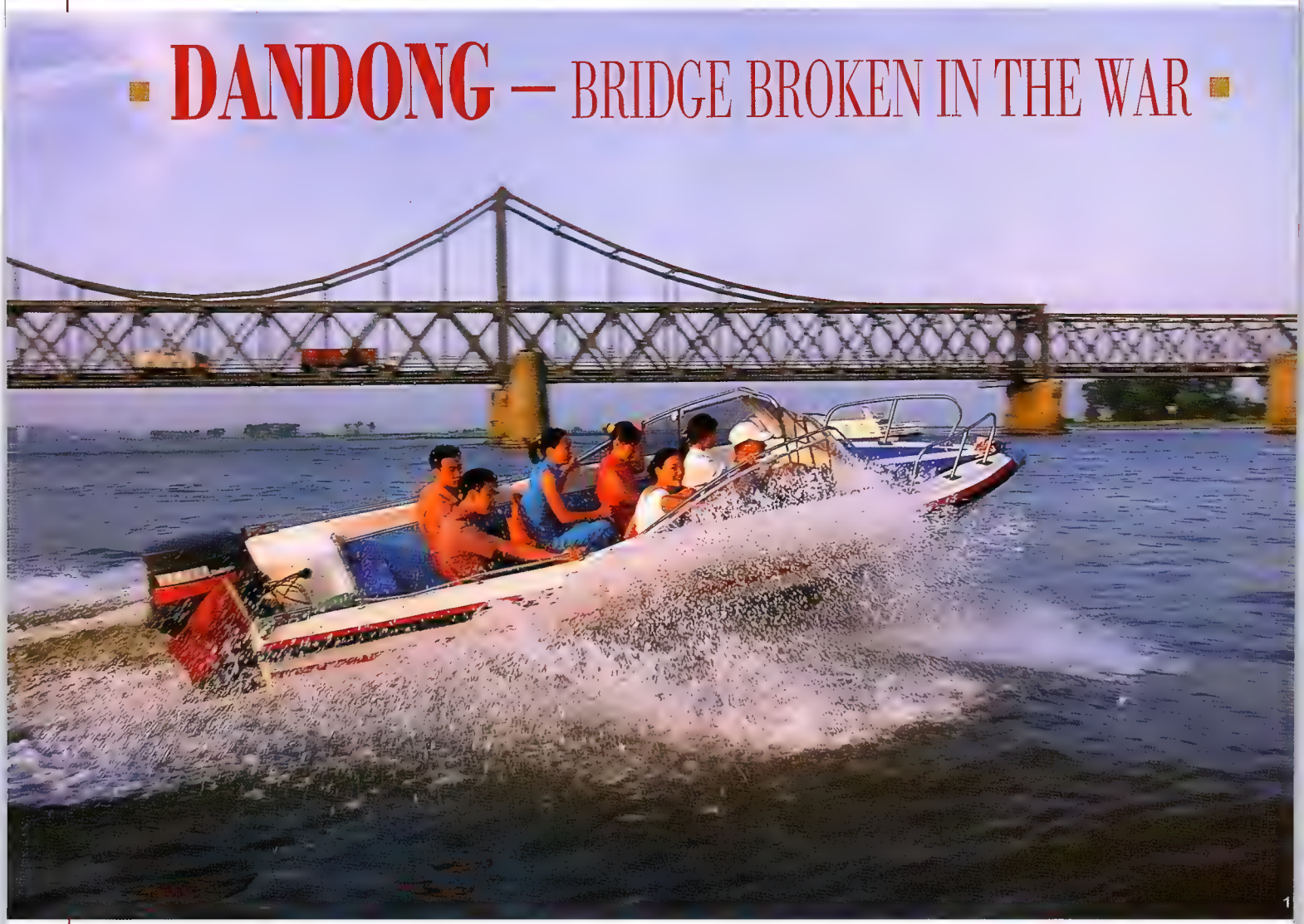
World Peace Park
Where World Leaders Meet

The newly built theme park has two main features: the statues of presidents of countries worldwide, and a large replica of a letter expressing people's desire for peace signed by ambassadors the world over plus the Secretary-General of the United Nations.

- Admission: 10 yuan
- Transport: a special tourist bus travels this route

Translated by Wang Mingjie

DANDONG – BRIDGE BROKEN IN THE WAR



Early in the morning, I stood at the window of the Zhonglian Hotel in Dandong City. The sun was rising quietly from beneath a long narrow strand of cloud. The soft rosy glow pierced brilliantly through lavender cloud and mist, suffusing the winding Yalujiang River with pink. Two bridges spanning the river connect Dandong with Sinuiju in D.P.R.K. on the other side.

Japan Builds Yalujiang River Bridge

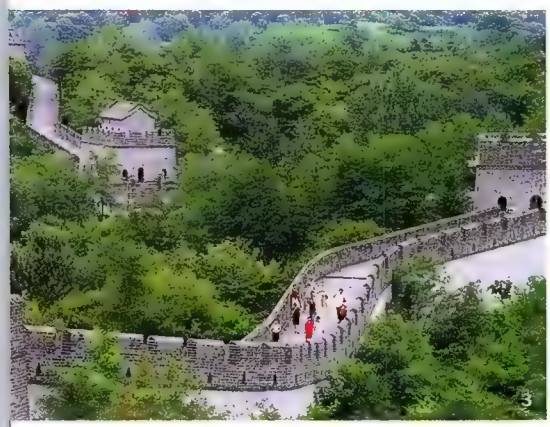
In 1905 Japan began to aggressively expand its presence in China. While building the Jingyi Railway from Tokyo to Sinuiju, it began to lay the Anfeng Railway from Dandong to Shenyang. To connect the two lines, the Japanese decided to build a bridge over the Yalujiang River. Six years later, the first bridge over the river was completed and opened to traffic. This was a single-track railway bridge with bowstring-shaped girders and 12 piers. It was 944.2 metres long and 11 metres wide, and had three-metre-wide footways on both sides. As large ships use the Yalujiang River, it was designed as a drawbridge. Three months before the "Lugou Bridge Incident", the Japanese built another railway bridge 100 metres upstream from the Yalu Bridge; this time double track, 946.21 metres long and 12 metres wide, with 12 openings in four groups. They then removed the railway lines on the first bridge and laid down wood planks to make it a highway bridge. After Japan was eventually defeated, the two bridges became important traffic routes owned jointly by China and Korea.

The Korean War erupted on 25 June, 1950. On 19 October, China sent its volunteer army across the Yalujiang River from

Dandong, Changdian Hekou and Ji'an to support Korea. Before long, United States aeroplanes bombed and destroyed the highway bridge at Changdian Hekou. Then over 100 B29 American airplanes bombed the bridge and broke it in the middle. The rails of the second bridge on the Korean side became buckled after the bombing. Six days later, 34 American bombers came to bomb the Yalujiang Bridge, leaving its three piers on the Korean side collapsed and the main trunk road completely paralyzed. As vehicles couldn't go across the bridge, materials for the front couldn't reach Korea. So the northern side rail of the double-track railway line on the second bridge was replaced immediately with wooden planks to make it a combined road and rail bridge.

When the Korean War was over, the dual-purpose bridge was named China-Korea Friendship Bridge. The first bridge wrecked by American bombs is referred to as the Broken Yalujiang Bridge. When Dandong was opened to the outside world in 1998, the Broken Yalujiang Bridge became the hottest tourist site in the city.

- Admission to the Broken Yalujiang Bridge: 15 yuan
- Opening hours: 7:30~18:30 ■ Tel: (415) 2144499



Hushan-Eastern End of the Great Wall

From the broken bridge, we went northward for 20 km along the Yalu River to see the Hushan section of the Great Wall.

If anyone asks where the eastern end of the Great Wall is, many people would say it is at Shanhaiguan Pass. But actually, the Great Wall starts from the dilapidated walls at Hushan, or Tiger Mountain, in Dandong. So why is the Hushan section of the Great Wall so little known? The reasons are twofold: One is that when General Xu Da began to build the Great Wall in 1389 during the Ming Dynasty, he first set its eastern end at Shanhaiguan. The part of the Great Wall in eastern Liaoning Province was not built until 1436, also in the Ming Dynasty. The second reason is that around the time when the Qing or the Manchu troops marched westward beyond the Shanhaiguan Pass, they demolished the part of the Great Wall that was roughly built in eastern Liaoning Province. The Great Wall at Shanhaiguan and further west was not only firmly built but also well maintained. So the Shanhaiguan Pass, equal in magnificence to the Jiayuguan Pass at the western end of the wall, was naturally regarded as the eastern end of the Great Wall.

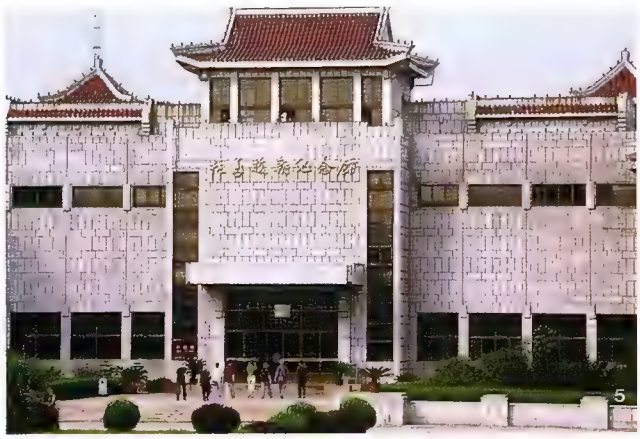
- Admission: 15 yuan
- Transport: Take a bus from Dandong to Kuandian (eastern route)
- Opening hours: 7:30~17:00
- Tel: (415) 5579025

Meeting Korean Soldiers at "One Step Stride"

Climbing up the beacon tower on top of Mt Hushan, we reached the eastern end of the Great Wall. Across a narrow river at the foot of the mountain lies D.P.R.K. In the dry season one can cross the river with just one step, hence it is called "One Step Stride."

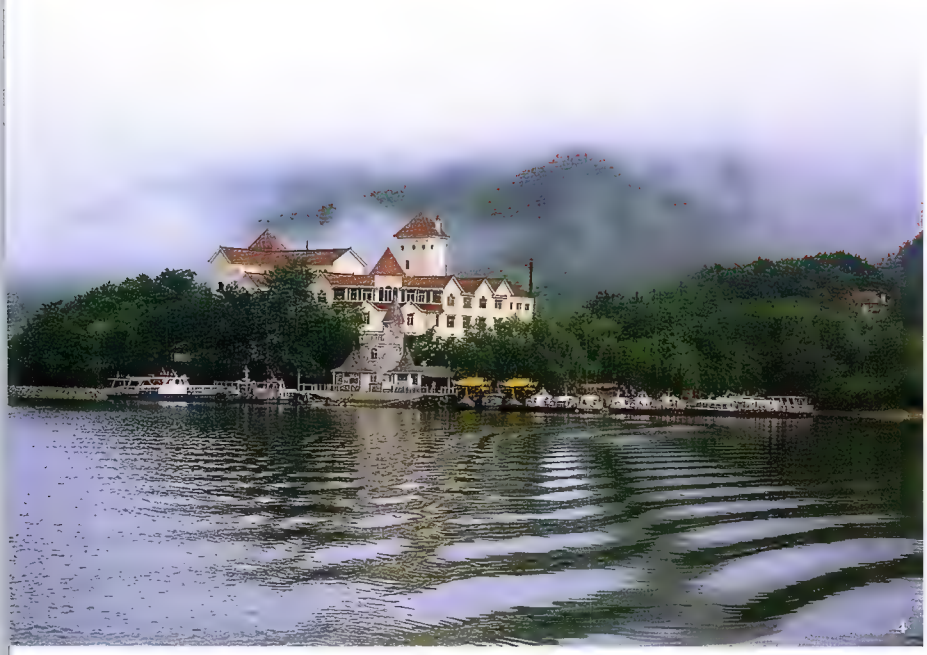
We walked down the stone steps and saw two patrolling guards of the North Korean frontier force bicycling past the bushes on the other side of the river. On seeing us, they stopped and gazed at us silently. It was scorching hot. They carried over their shoulders semi-automatic rifles and military water bottles, but they were drinking bottles of pure water marked "Wahaha" in Chinese. A middle-aged woman vendor who set up a stall at my side took the chance to accost me in a low voice: "In North Korea everything is bought by coupon. There was a famine a few years ago and many people had to eat tree bark, roots and wild grass.

1. Speedboats are available for tourists on the Yalujiang River
2. The China-Korea Friendship Bridge is a combined road and rail bridge owned and run by the two countries
3. The Hushan section of the Great Wall was built in the Ming Dynasty
4. North Korean soldiers on the other side of the "One Step Stride" on the China-Korea border
5. The Memorial Hall for the War to Resist US Aggression and Aid Korea in Dandong



It's a bit better now but wine and cigarettes are still under tight control. You can give them a few." Korean cigarettes are not expensive. She picked up a pack and said: "20 yuan." I asked her how I could send it to them. She pointed at a small boat by the river and said: "You can go by boat. So long as you stay on the river, you are not crossing the boundary illegally." A South Korean man bargained with her and finally bought a pack for 18 yuan. The man waved the cigarettes at the guards and shouted in Korean, asking them to come over. The guards also replied in Korean, asking the man to throw the cigarettes over to them, because the camera on their side might film them. The Korean man walked down to the riverside and threw the packet over. But the guards didn't come at once. It was not until we got on to the bus and we leaving there, that one of them quickly picked up the cigarettes and tucked the pack into his satchel. Then they both rode away like a whirlwind.

"One Step Stride" is part of Mt. Hushan scenic area. Admission: 15 yuan (including Hushan section of the Great Wall)



the waitresses-college girls from Pyongyang — were dressed in Korean costume, each wearing a badge of Kim Il Sung on their chests. They not only speak fluent Chinese but also sing Chinese pop songs beautifully. During our chats with them, they never spoke more than necessary and appeared cautious, neither humble nor arrogant.

We heard that last year Kim Chong Il was planning to turn Sinuiju into North Korea's special administrative zone with an independent judiciary system and the US dollar as its currency.

Will the dawn of reform begin with Sinuiju? We will wait and see.

- Qingliu Restaurant: No. A, Yalujiang River Park, Dandong
- Cost: About 25 yuan per person
- Cruise: 80 yuan

- Transport: Take a bus from Dandong to Kuandian (Eastern Route)
- Opening hours: 7:30~17:00 ■ Tel: (415) 557 9025

Pretty Korean Girls

After returning to Dandong, we had a Korean dinner that evening at the Qingliu Restaurant by the Yalujiang River. Run by Koreans, all

1. **Tourists can take a litter made of bamboo poles while touring the Qingshangou scenic area**
2. **Wulongshan Lingfeng Buddhist Temple is on Mt. Wulong northwest of Dandong. The abbot is a master of the Zen school from Jiangxi Province**
3. **The Korean college girls working in the Qingliu Restaurant can sing Chinese pop songs beautifully**
4. **Qingshan Lake in the Qingshan Valley Scenic Area has landscapes as charming as those in Switzerland**

Feast for 1,000 Celebrating a Farmer's Son off to College

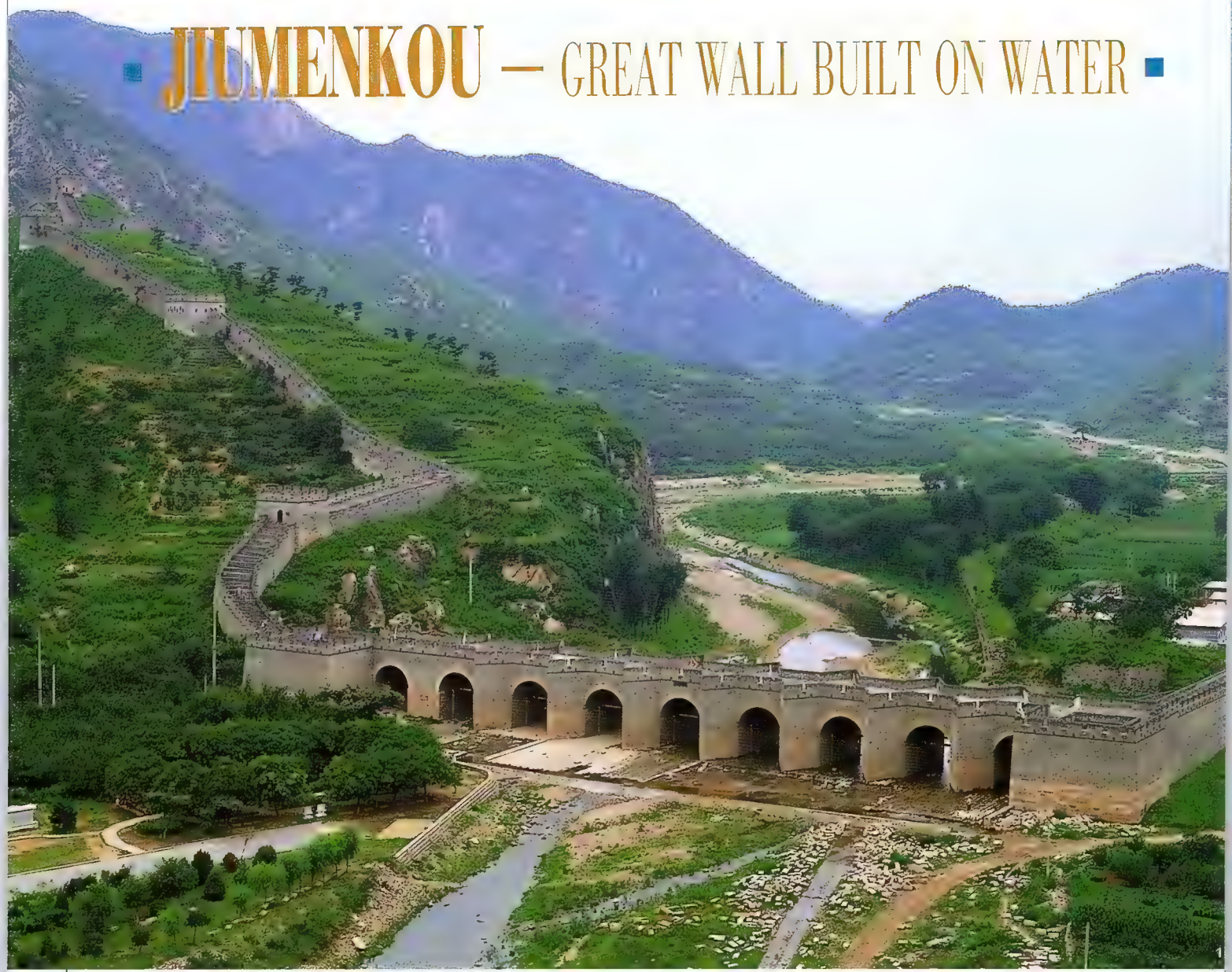
Farmer Tong Zhe in Zhangjia Village, Fengcheng in Dandong passed the national college entrance examination and was enrolled into the Beijing University of Aeronautics and Astronautics, majoring in international trade. The family couldn't believe it at first, so his parents took him quietly to Beijing to make sure. When the news was confirmed, Tong Zhe's father Tong Zhigui said, "This is the first college student ever in our family. We decided to set 150 tables to invite all the relatives and friends in the village to a dinner at a cost of 20,000 yuan. There is simply no room large enough for such a large banquet, so the feast was set on both sides of the road and it was very spectacular." To increase the festive atmosphere, the family invited an entertainment troupe from the Dandong TV Station to host the banquet. Of all the 150 households in the village, every family sent a person to congratulate the Tongs. Some presented 50 yuan, others 100. Tong Zhe's mother Dong Liyun said excitedly, "We wanted to invite our fellow villagers to a good dinner, but they are so kind and gave us altogether 40,000 yuan as gifts. We are really embarrassed." A yangge dance team of some 40 people from neighbouring Lipo Village also came to give a free performance on hearing the good news.

Tong Zhe giving a speech

Happiness shared with the villagers

Yangge dance team

JIUMENKOU — GREAT WALL BUILT ON WATER

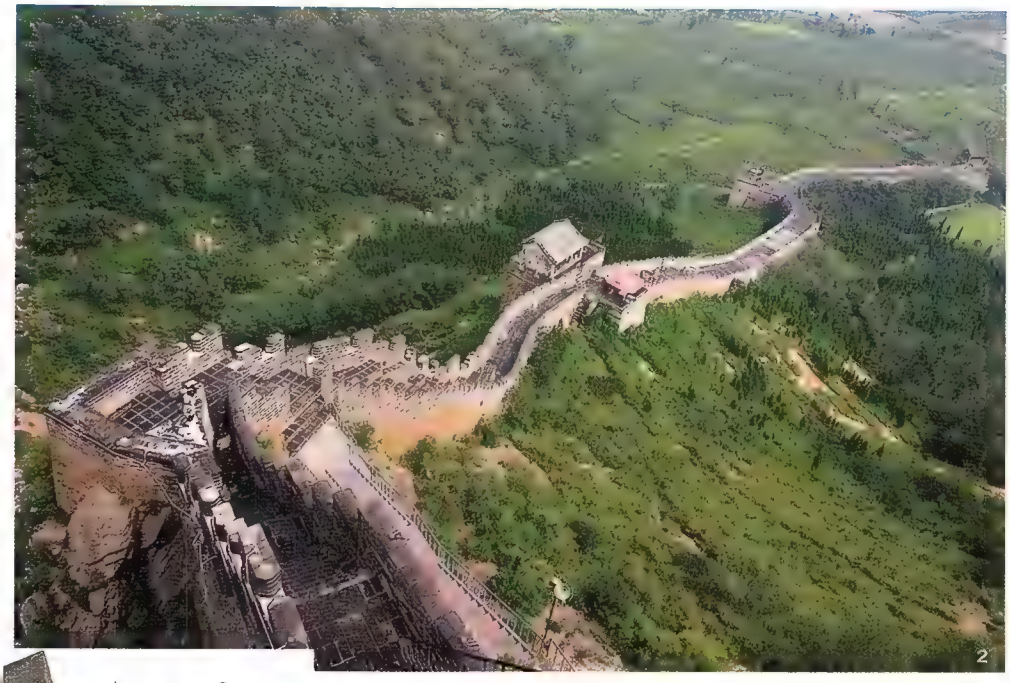


I was especially thrilled to visit the Jiumenkou section of the Great Wall around the city of Huludao in Liaoning Province. I have been to so many impressive passes on the Great Wall — Shanhaiguan Pass, Juyongguan Pass, Jiayuguan Pass, and Yumenguan and Yangguan passes further west as the Great Wall snakes over the Yanshan, Taihang, Helan and Qilian mountains and crosses the Gobi desert to the remote regions of the northwest. But I had really longed to see the Jiumenkou Pass.

Latest Addition to the World Heritage List

Jiumenkou Pass is the only section of the Great Wall built on water. Located in Lijiaxiang Village, Suizhong County, 62.5 km east of Suizhong Town and 15 km from the Shanhaiguan Pass, it is in the eastern part of the Great Wall under the jurisdiction of the Jizhen defence command during the Ming Dynasty (1368 — 1644). Named after the Jiujiang River and spanned by a gate tower with nine openings to allow water through, Jiumenkou Pass was built under the direction of the famous Ming Dynasty general Xu Da. A fierce battle was fought here between the commander of the Shanhaiguan area Wu Sangui and Li Zicheng, head of the peasant uprising that brought about the downfall of the Ming Dynasty. During the years of the Republic of China, two battles also broke out here between the warlords Cao Kun, Wu Peifu and their opponent Zhang Zuolin. In 1948, Communist generals Lin Biao and Luo Ronghuan led the Northeastern Field Army to march from Jiumenkou Pass to the Shanhaiguan Pass, closing in on Beiping (old name of Beijing) and Tianjin together with a million strong army of the northern military area. That was the famous Beiping-Tianjin Campaign.

It was the dry season when we arrived at Jiumenkou, so the almost exhausted Jiujiang River was reduced to a narrow stream. All the wall's nine arches were exposed along the 100-metre-wide dry riverbed. A few women squatted by the stream to do some washing. The sound of the wooden paddles beating the clothes echoed in the open valley. On hearing that I wanted to take pictures of the Great Wall on the water, our guide Xiao Zhang explained regretfully: "It will be much better if you come next year. We are building a dam on the lower reaches of the river to raise the water level so that the Jiumenkou Great Wall will always be seen on water." I followed Xiao Zhang down to the dry riverbed. Suddenly I realized this would be my first and also my last chance to walk on the riverbed in front of the Jiumenkou Great Wall before it is covered by water after the dam is completed, just like the Three Gorges area. So I slowed down and inspected it carefully. In times when there was no cement, the craftsmen put 7,000 square metres of stone slabs on the 100-metre wide riverbed, laid in a shape of the Chinese character "品", each with a mortise shaped like a sycee. When molten iron was poured in the slabs were keyed together, they were firmly joined, forming a large single stretch.



I walked as I looked around me and soon came up to the Jiumenkou Great Wall. The nine openings stand in a line, each about five metres wide and 10 metres high. The whole wall seems like a tall and magnificent bridge with nine arches. There are two stone blocks about the size of a basin on either side of each opening, indicating there used to be two huge gates for each passageway. In times of flood, the gates were opened to discharge water. In the dry season, the gates were closed. This kind of structure for military defence is very rare along the Great Wall. So the Jiumenkou section of the Great Wall was added to UNESCO's World Heritage List in November 2002.

- Admission: 30 yuan
- Transport: There is no direct bus from Huludao. So take a bus to Wanjia Town first for 20 yuan, then take a minibus to the Jiumenkou Great Wall for another 20 yuan. The distance is much shorter from the Shanhaiguan Pass to the Jiumenkou Great Wall, and a taxi would cost 40 yuan.
- Tel: (429) 6491155

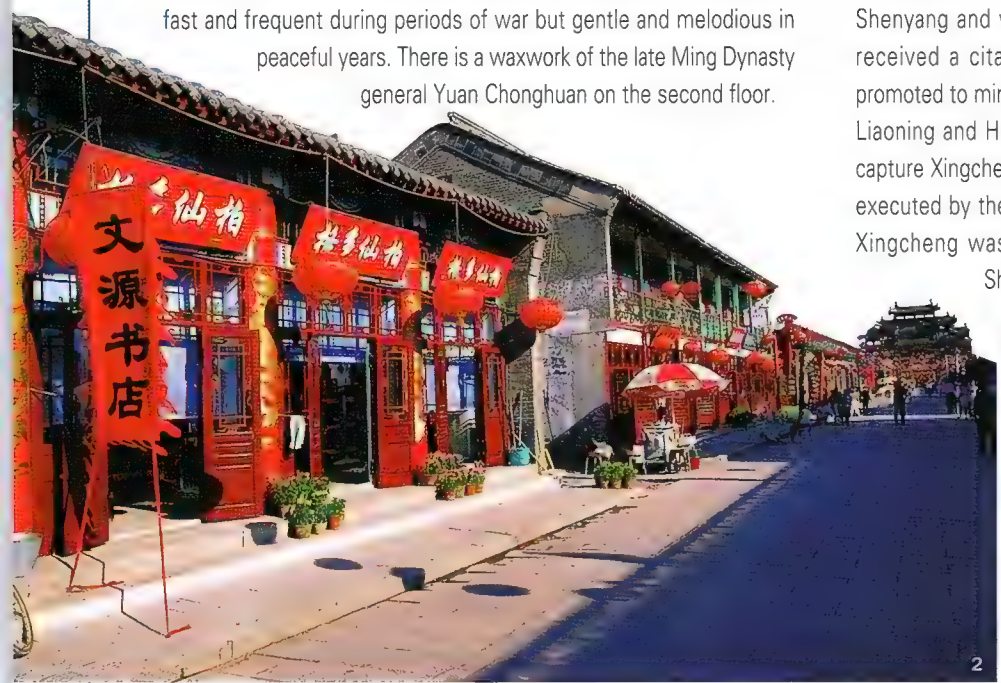
1. The Jiumenkou section of the Great Wall built over the Jiujiang River was named after the nine gates that allow river water through
2. Overlook the Jiumenkou Great Wall
3. Women wash clothes in the depleted Jiujiang River in front of the Great Wall

Words from Xie Guanghui

(All year when I visited the Jiumenkou Great Wall, I encountered no tourists in the area. Xiaozhang, a local tour guide, tried to welcome me: "Did you come here from Shanhaiguan?" After learning I had come specifically to see Jiumenkou, he said moving: "Most people go to see Shanhaiguan but very few come and see Jiumenkou. In fact Jiumenkou is the only part of the Great Wall built over water in China. However, very few people know this. When I discovered the Jiumenkou Great Wall is listed as an UNESCO World Heritage Site, I called Xiaozhang. He was incredibly pleased.

XINGCHENG – STRONGLY FORTIFIED CITY WALL

The old City Wall of Xingcheng was built during the Ming Dynasty by the Emperor Xuanzong to stop the invading Nüzhen from the north. Originally called Ningyuanwei City, it was renamed Ningyuanzhou City in the Qing Dynasty (1644—1911). It has one of the four best-preserved Ming Dynasty city walls in China. Looking down at the city from a height, I could see that it is a square with vertical and horizontal streets like a chessboard. I walked on the wall around the city and found the walls are completely preserved with four city gates. The square three-storeyed drum tower stands at the centre of the city, each side facing a city gate tower in the distance. The ground floor of the drum tower is a wide open gateway for the streets running from east to west and from north to south. The first storey features exhibitions of stoneware either fired or carved, and painted fine-clay porcelain from the Hongshan Culture or the Spring & Autumn (770—476 B.C.) periods and unearthed in western Liaoning Province. There is also a big drum, 2.25 metres in diameter, made of a single oxhide. A note on it said it was struck in wartime to launch an attack, and used in peacetime to herald the dawn. I guess that the drumbeats sounded fast and frequent during periods of war but gentle and melodious in peaceful years. There is a waxwork of the late Ming Dynasty general Yuan Chonghuan on the second floor.



In 1626, the predecessor of the Qing Dynasty, Nurhachi (1559—1626), led some 130,000 troops across the Liaohe River to attack Xingcheng. He first released all the captives, then tried to persuade the defending General Yuan Chonghuan to surrender, offering high official titles. Yuan bit his finger to write a pledge in blood, inspiring his men to guard the city with their lives. Nurhachi was infuriated and attacked the city wall fiercely. Yuan returned fire with cannons, inflicting heavy losses on the invaders. Nurhachi was seriously wounded and had to retreat. He died not long after returning to Shenyang and was succeeded by his eighth son Huangtaiji. Yuan received a citation from the emperor for his exploits and was promoted to minister of war, responsible for military affairs in eastern Liaoning and Hebei provinces. Ironically, Huangtaiji, who failed to capture Xingcheng after repeated attacks, succeeded in having Yuan executed by the emperor by driving a wedge between them. Soon Xingcheng was lost and the Qing troops marched west of the Shanhaiguan Pass. The Emperor Chongzhen climbed up Coal Hill in Beijing and committed suicide by hanging himself on a Chinese scholar tree by the Shouhuang Pavilion. The Ming Dynasty had fallen after ruling

1. Though more than 570 years old, the ancient City Wall of Xingcheng still retains its original appearance
2. Over 20 films have been shot in old Xingcheng, chosen for its uniquely ancient atmosphere
3. A scenic spot, Dragon Turning Its Head, on the Xingcheng beach
4. The drum tower marks the centre of the old city of Xingcheng, where the east-west and north-south streets meet

China for 277 years.

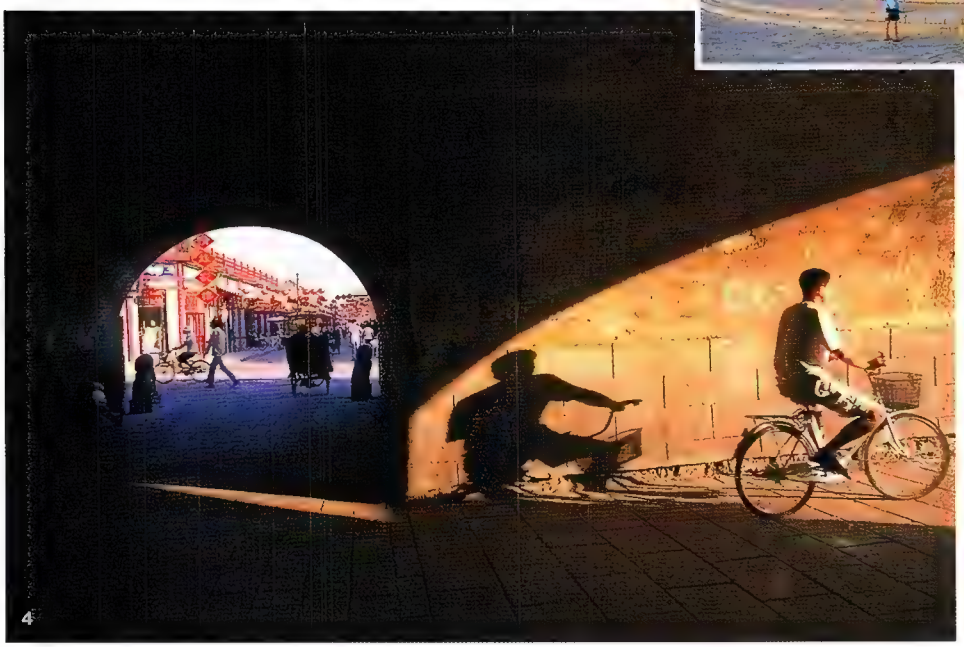
Four streets radiate east, south, west and north from the Drum Tower. The south street has two memorial arches in its central section. One dedicated to Zu Dashou praises his "loyalty, courage, and resourcefulness". Built in 1631, it was called by the locals "the first memorial arch". The other for Zu Dale is inscribed "Outstanding hero mounting the altar". This is popularly called "the second memorial arch" as it was built seven years after the first one. Zu Dashou and Zu Dale not only were cousins, but both served under Yuan Chonghuan, earning battle honours in defending Xingcheng. The memorial arches were bestowed by the Emperor Chongzhen. Yet later the cousins betrayed the Ming and served the Qing. The two arches then became a huge irony. So when Qing Emperor Ganlong came to Xingcheng on his inspection tour, he couldn't help laughing when he saw the memorial arches.

On 12 September, 1948, the Liaoxi-Shenyuang Campaign started. The Kuomingtang's 54th Army built many bunkers outside the Xingcheng city wall and fortifications at its corners, expecting to form an impregnable defensive line with the fortified city wall. To capture Xingcheng at one stroke, scores of guns from the 34th artillery regiment of the Communist Northeastern Field Army were all trained on the city overnight. Yet right before the attack, the colonel of the regiment suddenly hesitated. To protect the ancient city and its residents, he quietly changed the attack plan and gave a secret order to remove the fuses of all the artillery shells, except for one that would make an opening for infantry to get into the city. When the battle began, the guns roared at the old city. The defending KMT troops surrendered and the county governor of Xingcheng tried to escape by disguising himself as a commoner but was caught. The next day after the battle a public trial was held. The colonel of the artillery regiment was sentenced to death for disobeying orders and was sent to the execution ground with the KMT county governor. Townspeople heard of this and came to plead for leniency from the judge: "A shell landed in my yard last night," one said. "There's one in my yard too. Thank goodness it didn't explode," said another. The army's senior officer was touched and quashed the death penalty. But the colonel couldn't serve in the army any more having disobeyed orders. So in tears he finally left his comrades in arms and returned to his hometown.

Juhua – Big Island in Liaodong Bay

Juhuadao or Chrysanthemum Island, 12 km away from the Xingcheng tourist dock, can be reached by boat. This is the biggest island in Liaodong Bay and a well-known Buddhist site ever since the Liao Dynasty (907—1125). From the remains of the Dragon Palace Temple and former site of Great Mercy Tower, we can see the temples were rather substantial originally.

We walked around the island and visited such scenic spots as the Stone Buddha Temple, Nine Capstones, Octagonal Coloured Glazed Well, Holy Water Basin, and the Commanding Platform. But I was most impressed with the fresh seafood on the island: sea cucumber, abalone, big blood clams, oysters, fish and shrimps. The dishes served in restaurants there are mostly steamed or boiled. Though simply cooked, the ingredients are all very fresh so we can appreciate their original flavours.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■ Admissions to City Wall and Drum Tower 5 yuan each

■ Transport: Buses run between Huludao City and the Old City of Xingcheng. ■ Tel: (429) 5452930. A seaside area comprising the four bays of Xinghai, Yugang, Bingjia and Laolongwan, lies 8 km southeast of Xingcheng city proper. It features a beach and a Sea-view Pavilion, and the Huludao-Xingcheng Marine Fair is held there every year. ■ Admissions to the Seaside Park: 5 yuan ■ Tel: (429) 5152510

JINZHOU – HEAVENLY BRIDGE OVER THE SEA

When I reached Bijiashan, or Pen Rack Mountain, it was already dark. The tide had swallowed the "heavenly bridge". The sea glimmered like fish scales in the silvery moonlight. Mt. Bijia looked like a small lonely island — not so attractive without its "heavenly bridge".

According to the prevailing tides, the best time to go to see the "heavenly bridge" to Mt. Bijia was before 6 a.m.

So I went to the beach at dawn before the sun was up. The view into the distance was completely different from the day before. A cobblestone road, 1,600 metres long and eight metres wide, appeared on the sea like magic. It looked fantastic and I was wild with excitement.

I walked down the stone steps to the "heavenly bridge" exposed by the ebb tide. Stepping on the wet and smooth cobblestones, I followed the "heavenly bridge" to Mt. Bijia. Every now and then crabs popped out from under heaps of cobblestones, scuttling sideways so swiftly that they disappeared in no time. When I reached the foot of Mt. Bijia the sun had just emerged out of the sea, spreading its golden rays over the water's surface. I looked back. The wandering "heavenly bridge" was already cut at the waist by the rising tide. Many tourists had turned back. Gazing at the sea, they could only sigh and wait to take a boat. But the young romantic lovers who like to take risks, kept walking on. A young man rolled his trousers up to his thighs. With camera in one hand and his girlfriend's high-heeled shoes in the other, he stretched out his arms to keep his balance, looking like a dragonfly. The girl, holding her skirt in her hands, walked unsteadily behind him, like a butterfly waving its wings.

From the entrance to Mt. Bijia, we walked along the road up the mountain. After the Taoist Temple to the Immortal, the Pavilion of Lü Dongbin (one of the eight immortals in Taoist mythology), we reached the highest point on Mt. Bijia — the stone Three Purity Tower which has a combination of statues of Buddhist, Taoist, Confucian and mythological figures.

After touring Mt. Bijia, we returned by boat. As we looked back at the Three Purity Tower standing high on top of the mountain, we were told people from several hundred metres around there come to burn joss sticks every March. They pray on every floor for good health and wealth, both in this world and in the one to come.

- Admission: 20 yuan
- Tourist boat: 10 yuan
- Transport: A special-line bus from Jinzhou railway station to Mt. Bijia costs 5 yuan
- Best season to visit: May to September
- Tel: (416) 3581302

1. A "heavenly bridge" appears after the tide falls, leading directly to Mt. Bijia (by Liang Weijie)
2. Carrying fresh water to Mt. Bijia before the tide rises

FENGGUO TEMPLE – LIAONING'S TREASURE HOUSE OF PAINTED STATUES

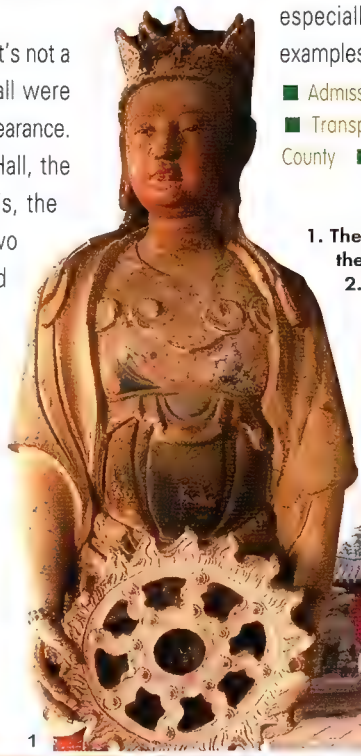
Built in 1020 during the Liao Dynasty, Fengguo Temple was also called the Big Buddha Temple. As there are seven big statues of Buddha in the Mahavira Hall.

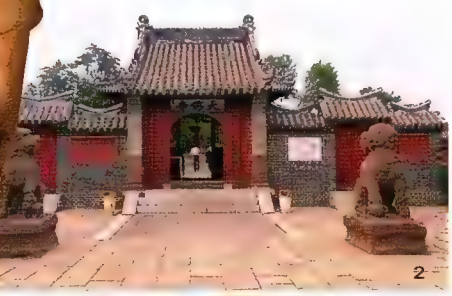
There are no longer any monks there, so strictly speaking it's not a temple any more. In 1988, a gateway and an encircling wall were rebuilt on the original sites to restore the temple's former appearance. The two hexagonal bell pavilions in front of the Mahavira Hall, the square pavilion with a stele, the Hall of Infinity on the axis, the memorial arch, the smaller gate to the temple, and the two meditation halls with a Chinese gabled roof in the western yard were all added later during the Qing Dynasty (1644—1911). Only the Mahavira Hall was a Liao Dynasty structure and is the largest of all Liao Dynasty wooden structures still existing in China today.

In the Mahavira Hall are the seven big statues of Buddha from east to west, each over eight metres high and with vivid yet different expressions. Similar statues can also be found in China's early grottoes such as the Yungang and Longmen grottoes, but they were generally carved on side walls or above doors. Seldom are all of the seven Buddhas enshrined together as they are here in the Mahavira Hall.

Below the shrines two-metre-high attendant Bodhisattvas stand on either side of each Buddha. They either look up or bow their heads, look straight ahead or stand sideways. Their especially lifelike shapes make them outstanding examples of painted sculptures of the Liao Dynasty.

■ Admission 15 yuan Opening hours: 8:00~16:30
■ Transport A bus runs between Jinzhou City and Yixian County ■ Tel (416) 7721535

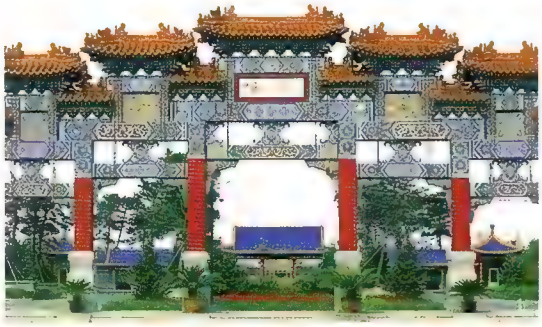




1. The attendant Bodhisattva below the shrines in the Mahavira Hall in Fengguo Temple
2. Built in 1020, it was originally called Xianxi Temple but was renamed Fengguo Temple in the Jin Dynasty
3. The seven big statues of Buddha in Fengguo Temple (photo courtesy of the temple)

PANJIN – ENDLESS SEA OF REEDS

Panjin is a newly built petroleum city in the Liaohe River Delta. In this 20-year-old city, streets are straight and houses new. We visited the Liaohe Forest of Steles in the city's Lakeshore Park. This is the biggest architectural group built in the ancient style in Northeast China. Occupying a 20-hectare site, with a collection of 2,000 works of calligraphy and tablet inscriptions made by famous artists from the time of the oracle bone inscription to the present age. This is the only forest of steles that includes works from all dynasties,



The Largest Reed Marsh in China

Forty kilometres from the city lies the Shuangtaizi Hekou State Nature Reserve. It has 1.03 million *mu* (1 *mu* =1/15 of a hectare or 1/6 of an acre) of reeds and is the largest reed-producing area in China. This is also the habitat for up to 253 kinds of rare birds.

After 45 minutes, we came to the crane garden in the eco-tourist area of the Liaohe Delta. Red-crowned cranes (*Grus japonensis*) are the second rarest cranes next to the American cranes. There are now fewer than 2,500 altogether left in the world, 900 of them in Hokkaido, Japan. They reproduce mainly in swampland on the middle and lower reaches of the Heilongjiang and Nenjiang rivers in China. Red-crowned cranes are migratory birds. Every year in mid-October before the cold current from Siberia arrives, they leave Heilongjiang Province. They fly via Jilin, Liaoning, Hebei and Shandong provinces, all the way to the Honghu and Poyang lakes on the lower reaches of the Yangtse River and the surrounding shallow or wetlands that don't freeze in winter, resting and feeding from time to time on

the journey. They survive on fish, worms, frogs and shellfish. Sometimes they also eat seaweed and grain. When winter is over and spring comes again, they fly in flocks with their families to the north again. Being either too small or too weak to handle long distance flying, some red-crowned cranes have lost both the ability to catch food and the inclination to migrate over the course of time. So they have become permanent residents in the Shuangtaizi Hekou National Nature Reserve.

I climbed up the observation tower and looked around. Stretching 55 km from north to south and 25 km from east to west lay the largest reed wetland in the world. Reeds aid water filtration so the water quality in the Liaohe Delta is excellent, and the crabs there especially are as stout and strong as those growing in Lake Yangcheng. Reed are herbaceous perennials. They will grow again after being cut, like leeks. After flattening them and peeling off the skin, the locals use the excellent reed stalks to weave mats for window awnings and export them to Japan and South Korea. Ordinary reed stalks are woven into mats and sold in China's northeast rural areas. Barns covered with reed mats are dry and airy. The lowest quality reeds are pulped. After dehydration and compression, they become high quality writing paper or smooth copperplate paper.

■ Best season to visit: May to October ■ Tel: (427) 2688031

Vast Expanse of the Red Beach

Another natural landscape in Panjin is the "Red Beach". The beach looks red because it is covered by a kind of alkali tolerant grass that grows only in the Liaohe Delta area. Every year in May or June its light red shoots sprout from the ground. In July or August the grass turns peach red, and in September and October, scarlet. Then in November it becomes purple and later gradually dries up and darkens. So the most beautiful time on the "Red Beach" is during September and October when the whole area is made scarlet by the grass. At sunset with pink clouds in the sky, it is extremely spectacular seeing heaven and earth colour-coordinated. I arrived there in August, two months earlier than the best season. But on the 1500-metre-wide beach, the soft red grass, tender and close to the ground, was like a huge peach-red carpet. Interspersed with the green reeds in the distance, the red beach, though not as bright and vibrant as in late September, was refreshing and with a beauty all its own.

■ Admission: 10 yuan ■ Transport: Taxi or private car
■ Best season to visit: June to October ■ Tel: (427) 2825411

1. **The Liaohe Forest of Steles, located to the west of Lakeshore Park in Panjin, features over 2,000 pieces of calligraphy works written by famous calligraphers in ancient and modern times**
2. **Panjin has the world's largest reed wetland of (by Chan Yat Nin)**
3. **Sunset on the "Red Beach" (by Chan Yat Nin)**
4. **Birds inhabiting the "Red Beach" (photo courtesy of Panjin Tourist Bureau)**
5. **The rare red-crowned cranes are migratory birds. They fly south in mid-October for the winter every year (photo courtesy of Panjin Tourist Bureau)**
6. **Autumn is the best season to appreciate the "Red Beach" (photo courtesy of Panjin Tourist Bureau)**

YINGKOU – HOME TO THE PALEOANTHROPIC MEN

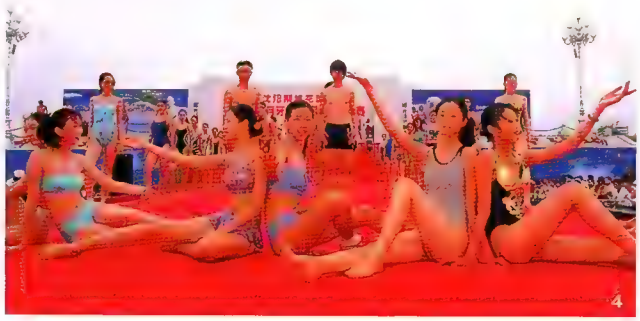
Our car drove along the country road in midsummer, accompanied by the chirping of cicadas and occasional barking of dogs. It was already dusk when we arrived at Jinniushan or Golden Ox Mountain. The mountain crinkling in the setting sun looked like an irregular ancient rock painting torn and worn down. Jinniu Mountain seems so old, profound and mysterious.

Fossils of Paleoanthropic Men Found in Quarrying

An exhibition hall of paleoanthropic man stands at the foot of Jinniu Mountain of Yingkou City. Among the exhibits there are presentations of the rock structure of Jinniu Mountain, the mammals living during the Quaternary period, fossils of birds and reptiles and human skulls found in the mountain.

Over 30 years ago, villager Shen Zhihong was undertaking his routine work firing quarry powder in a stone pit in Jinniu Mountain behind the village. When the sulphurous smoke had dissipated after a few blasts, a pitch-dark cave was exposed. He went in and saw to his amazement in the gruesome cave many white bones of human beings or animals, some already turned into fossils. The news attracted the attention of a 50-year-old archeological expert who stayed in the village for one and a half months. Later, the expert came almost every year. While digging in the cave, he found fossils of paleoanthropic men living 280,000 years ago, some stone tools, traces of fire, and a large quantity of animal fossils. There is a completely preserved fossil of a paleoanthropic man, who lived in the transitional period between homo erectus and homo sapiens neanderthalensis, equivalent to the late period of the Peking man dating back 700,000 to 230,000 years ago. With skull, upper limb ulna, hand bones, lower limb hipbone and foot bones, this was the first complete fossil of an ape man found in China, and very rare in the world. Therefore the finding was listed as one the top 10 world new discoveries in science and technology in 1984.

Jinniu Mountain has long been under the state protection as a cultural relics zone, and Shen Zhihong, who found the cave years ago, lost his job as a blaster because of this discovery. When I found Shen, he didn't complain, instead, he enthusiastically showed me the



way to the cave some 100 metres east of the exhibition hall. The rock fault in the section plane shows the strata of the late Pleistoncene period and early Old Stone Age, basically similar to the Ape Man's Cave in Zhoukoudian, Beijing. He told me that the skull was found in the reddish brown sandy earth at the bottom of the seventh stratum in the cave of Jinniu Mountain.

So, the caves were the original home of our human beings.

■ Entrance fee: 5 yuan ■ Transport: Private car or taxi

Stone Hut Mystery

We left Jinniu Mountain and drove to the Ertai Stone Hut a dozen kilometres south of Xiongyue Town. Facing southeast, the rectangular Stone Hut has three huge stone slabs standing in the east, west and north sides to form three-sided wall. The covering stone slabs on top of the three-metre-high hut overhung like an awning. I observed the Stone Hut carefully and found its corners and angles were all smoothly polished to a fine degree. I couldn't help admiring the simple yet great work.

Although there is no written record of the origin of this 4,000-year-old Stone Hut, there are two explanations in academic circles. One is that this is a tomb dating back to the late Neolithic Age; another is that it is a place for ancient sacrificial and religious activities. After years of argument, consensus has not been reached. But what fascinates me is, with a distance of some 40 km from the nearest source of granite-the Shuiyu Quarry, how did the ancients finish such a great project over 4,000 years ago?

■ Transport: Private car or taxi which may cost 80 yuan from Yingkou City

Splendid Seascape at the Crescent Bay

Standing on the beach of Crescent Bay, I was caressed by the cool sea breeze, slightly salty and fishy. Waves surged, rolling onto the shore. Children took off their shoes and stepped barefooted on the soft fine golden sand. Ignoring their parents' warning, they jumped happily into the sea. Beach umbrellas in the distance looked like beautiful mushrooms among which, people in all sorts of swimming suits walked leisurely around — a charming seascape indeed.

Four years ago, the National Sailboat Team chose Crescent Bay as its training base for its silvery sand, clear water and calm sea. They performed outstandingly in the international competition that year and Crescent Bay was in great favour with the sportsmen. In the summer of 2001, the Asian Beach Volleyball Tournament was successfully held here. The next summer, a larger scale Asian Beach Volleyball Championships was also opened here. Right after that, a grand swimming model contest attracted lots of attention with light and bright music. There is simply so much fun out there in the bay, highlighted with exciting and wonderful performances.

Scenic Area of Son-Expecting Mountain

In the Wang'ershan (Son-Expecting Mountain) Scenic Area, there is a sculpture of a mother on the white marble step. She has an emaciated face, her palms held together before her abdomen, looking far into the distance. After the statue, I turned right and climbed up a pathway that became narrower and steeper as the steps led up. I was surrounded by craggy rocks and had to grasp tightly the iron chains and climbed with all my might on the stone stairs chiseled out of the steep rocks. With great effort I got onto the mountain top. There is a Golden Vase Pagoda before the cliff, its octagonal brick base carved with patterns of flowers, grass, clouds and lotus flower petals. This pagoda of some 10 metres was built for mothers.

I looked back as I walked down the mountain and saw a huge rock on the cliff, which resembles so much an old lady raising her head and looking hard for her son to come back. The Son-Expecting Mountain got its name from this huge rock.

■ Admission: 10 yuan

■ Transport: It is 1.5 km northeast of the Xiongyue Railway Station and can be reached by special-line mini-bus

■ Best visiting time: April to November

■ Open hours: Summer 8:00~18:00/ Winter 9:00~16:00

Translated by Yu Ling

1. The Ertai Stone Hut is admirably built of five large granite stone slabs
2. The paleoanthropic man found in Jinniu Mountain was in the transitional period between homo erectus and homo sapiens neanderthalensis. This finding was listed as one of the Top 10 World Advancements in Science and Technology in 1984
3. Villager Shen Zhihong shows the cave to the reporter
4. The model contest held at the Crescent Bay
5. The Golden Vase Pagoda on top of the Son Expecting Mountain

Tunbao People
Descended from Frontier Soldiers

Photos by Chan Yat Nin Article by Zhang Xiaosong

Westward of the provincial capital of Guiyang, between it and the Huangguoshu Waterfalls, you find stone-built villages with stone houses and tall watchtowers along a 150-km stretch of karst landscapes that cover some 1,340 sq km. A special group of people lives here. They wear long blue robes with wide sleeves and speak a distinctive language unlike any other, and in all their rites of passage and daily lives they follow their own old customs. These people seem old-fashioned, but it is thanks to their ancestors that Guizhou Province was formed and the history of this part of China was changed forever.

The Hans who came to the province later called them the "Tunbao (屯堡 stone castles) people". The term of reference seems to indicate a special status different from the Hans but not quite that of a minority ethnic group.

Masters of Farming and Defence

After Ming Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang (1328—1398) had successfully conquered Yunnan and Guizhou provinces in the 14th century, the Ming kingdom wanted long-term control of the southwestern region. As the stability of Guizhou was important, roads leading to Yunnan were ordered built, with security posts along the way, and a large number of soldiers to guard them. In the 11th year of the Ming Dynasty's Yongle period (1413) the new emperor Zhu Li gave the title of general to Gu Cheng and sent 5,000 troops to be stationed in Guizhou, who were the ancestors of nowadays' Tunbao people. Today when you open up a map of Guizhou and look along the ancient post roads, you will find many place names relating to the military. They all bear the marks of ancient times when Han soldiers were stationed here to control the indigenous people.

The Tunbao people came to Anshun, Pingba and Zhenning in the mid-Guizhou region from Jiangxi, Nanjing and Anhui provinces. They stayed for 600 years and after 17 to 18 generations their population now totals around 300,000. In southwestern China they have left glorious pages in the history of troops stationed to guard the frontier, while at the same time proudly maintaining the lifestyles of their ancestral homes in the Yangtse Delta in the Ming Dynasty.

Stone Castles in the Highlands

Since the Tunbao people were really on the frontline, their priority when building houses was they must be strong and able to protect their inhabitants. As a result rows of stone castles appeared in the hilly regions.

Yunshantun is a typical village designed with protection in mind. It is situated in the Yunjiushan Canyon south of Qiyanqiao (Seven-eye Bridge) Town in eastern Anshun City. The hillside in front of the village

is steep and dangerous, and only a winding path made from stone steps leads to the entrance of the village. Stone walls on two sides of the village stand six metres high and more than five kilometres long. The walls are built on the cliffs and 14 watchtowers are located in key areas. The east-west main street goes right through the entire village, while a network of winding alleys cleverly connects each and every household. The houses, temples, theatre and watchtowers were all built according to the contours of the mountain. The whole layout of the village, the way the streets are designed and even the structure of

1. The tea in stone castles was originally used to treat officials or soldiers passing by, but today it is served to tourists at the Tianlong Tunbao
2. Tunbao customs have passed unchanged from generation to generation and the tradition of performing field opera every year at festivals has carried on for centuries
3. Yunshantun still has a perfectly preserved stone castle

the houses are integrated to form a most ingenious three-layered closed defence system.

From the outside, the architecture of the stone castles seems hard and austere, but the interior decoration is actually quite particular about. The stone carving and woodcarving arts from the south of the Yangtse River have been used to magnificent effect here.

Field Opera — From Ancient "Army Ritual"

The outside world knew about the Tunbao people from their "dixi" (field operas), or performances staged in the fields. The Tunbao coined this term and their soldiers brought this theatrical art with them when they came to Guizhou. It originated from ancient times as a military ritual aimed at ensuring victory by boosting the soldiers' morale and frightening the enemy.

Although they leave the stage to the men, women form a very loyal audience. During the show, the actors wear cotton cheongsams and tie embroidered war costumes around their waists. They have flags at their backs, a black veil covers the face and on top of their foreheads wear wooden masks decorated with pheasant feathers. The only instruments used are one gong and one drum. Around Anshun, the fields are on flat land beside hills, so while a performance takes place on the level the audience watches from the slopes. If the masks are on the actors' faces, only their heads can be seen. It is not clear when the tradition of covering the actors' faces with a black veil and wearing opera masks on the forehead began. But this way, the audience on the hill can see the actors' masks.

The Tunbao people refer to the masks in field opera as "lianzi" (face). These masks reflect the soul of field opera, without which there can be no performance. The masks are carved from strong poplar or lilac wood. Because each village has its own field opera troupe, each performance uses anything from 30~40 to 100~200 masks. The demand has led to special "mask-carving" villages. Jin'guantun is one of those professional carving villages, where inherited skills have been preserved to this day and everyone is an expert at carving "lianzi".

The Tunbao people invite gods to banish evil and disasters, as well as bless the year's happy events and harvest. As a mask symbolizes a god, they are given to respected and highly responsible troupe leaders to store carefully. Unless there is a performance the box must not be

opened. Before every performance, a full set of rules must be followed that's been handed down from theirs forebears: from "Kaiguang" (putting on lacquer), "Kaixiang" (taking the masks out of the box before the performance) to "Fengxiang" (storing the masks after the performance), sacrificial rites must be held. This way, the masks retain their "Shengqi" (power of gods) and will work their magic on human life to exorcise evil and bring good.

The content of field opera mostly follows folk legends and songs, such as *Romance of the Three Kingdoms*, *Gods of Honour*, and *Xue Rengui's Conquest of the East*. The field operas are only performed at the Spring Festival and when the rice flowers bloom; the significance is that ghosts can be exorcised and happiness attained. An opera may attract thousands, even tens of thousands of watchers. Some come from miles away and watch the same opera again and again, seeming never to tire of it.

The field opera style is high-pitched and powerfully voiced, and the Tunbao people sing together to produce a charming, folksy sound. When one performer is singing, the rest all harmonize. Researchers into field opera say the style comes from Jiangxi Province and is very similar to Jiangxi's Geyang Opera.

Tunbao Women

The Tunbao people follow traditional lifestyles and their women are the most loyal protectors of Tunbao culture. After 600 years, they haven't lost their local dialects or style of dress. When you walk among them, you will be moved by their faith in their own culture.

Upon entering a Tunbao village, the women's dress will catch your eye most. They have special hair braids and wear long robes of cotton with especially wide sleeves, so they are also referred to as "big sleeves". Pure blue is the main colour of the Tunbao women's clothes. They also wear deep green or purple, but never red or yellow. Experts have made careful studies of their customs and conclude their clothes, both in colour and style, which clearly reflect those in the south of the Yangtse River at the end of the Yuan and early Ming periods.

Because the Tunbao women have never had their feet bound, they are also called "Big Feet Sisters" or "Farmer Sisters". They can carry heavy loads and are extremely hardworking. But don't let it fool you that they are rough and tough. These women whose ancestors came from the Yangtse Delta are also well known for their cleverness. Over centuries, they have mixed the delicate cuisine of the Yangtse Delta with the local produce, and created such delicacies as cured meat, sausages, fowls' blood tofu, fermented tofu, fermented black beans, pickles, as well as candies. These tasty goodies are famous in the mid-Guizhou region. Tunbao-style cuisine is unique, and if you come to one of the Tunbao villages, they will serve you the famous chili chicken with tofu. This features a pot of bright red chili chicken soup in which white and tender tofu is immersed, accompanied by tender greens and a sip of the home brewed Pangjing wine which is made from glutinous rice. This is a dish few guests can resist. The difference is they won't try to talk you into drinking more, but will persuade you to eat more.

In Tunbao culture, the gender roles are clear cut-men farm and women keep house, men perform opera and women practise Buddhism, and everyone is content with their roles. Various festivals and Buddhist activities form an important part of the women's lives. They play the lead in religious activities while the men are either onlookers or at most help keep order. The reason for this goes back to the times when the men both tended the farms and kept the frontier areas peaceful. Whenever there were battles, their lives could be endangered. Memories of war have made the women firm believers in Buddhism and they seek Buddha's blessings for peace and safety.

The Tunbao people, keepers of history for 600 years, never forgot their ancestral homeland while toiling long and hard in the wide plains and highlands of mid-Guizhou to establish their new homes. Life has gone on quietly but satisfyingly for six centuries. These people live freely and have firm beliefs.

Translated by Cheng Lei

1. The field operas are all action stories traditionally performed by men
2. It is easy to see the defensive purpose of these stone watchtowers standing tall in the Benzhai Tunbao
3. The dietary habits of the Tunbao people still reflect their military past. Their food is easily carried and preserved. Their principle is "feed guests until they're full" but don't force guests to drink more. The housewives also have a unique skill of "flying rice" to guests' bowls
4. The "face" is the soul of field opera. The face mask is taken from its box before every field opera performance. A set of strictly followed rituals has been inherited from ancestors

Travel Guide of Seeing Tunbao Customs

Photos by Chan Yat Nin
Article by Chen Yinian, Ouyang Changpei

1

Over the past 600 years, within an area of a 100 *lis* (50 km) radius of Anshun Prefecture, the Tunbao people still proudly identify themselves as descendants of the Ming Dynasty troops of Emperor Zhu Yuanzhang. With their unusual costumes, ornaments, lifestyle and dialect, they have become a unique community who are totally different from the modern Han. Hence they are known as "old Han people". The Tunbaos represent a Ming Dynasty time warp.

These former military outposts have sparked great interest in tourists. Many have become tourist attractions in recent years, such as Jiuxitun, Qiyanqiao Town, Benzhaitun and Tianlongtun. None are from Anshun City. Tourists can base themselves at Anshun and visit the Tunbaos in the surrounding areas.

Jiuxitun Village

Jiuxitun, one of the largest communities of the descendants of the Ming dynasty soldiers, is 27 km east of Anshun City and seven km south of Daxiqiao Town. Jiuxitun is a small town consisting of several thousand stone houses, which are home to over 2,000 people from nearly 1,000 families. In front of the town runs the Jiuxi (Nine Stream) River composed as its name suggests, of nine small streams.

In the past, Jiuxitun was located on the post road from Guiyang to Anshun, Zhenning and even to Yunnan. Housing a large number of soldiers, horses and merchants, Jiuxitun was an important military outpost. Jiuxitun is also known for its local opera, which features excellent, large-scale performances. The various festivals, celebrations and sacrificial rites are also unusual. Guohehui, or the Cross River Festival, held once every 13 years, is the grandest religious event for women. In fact, when 1,000 women cross the river, they receive judgments from their god. During the event, a large number of women gather by the Jiuxi River, with setting indicating scenes seen in the underground world. All the women of Jiuxitun kowtow, confess, pray and offer sacrifices to the gods. They curse and spit on pictures symbolising gossipy women as a warning to the townspeople they should be kind to each other to safeguard the unity of their community.

The Peach Festival on the third day of the

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third lunar month is another important day for women in the former military outposts. On that day women vie with each other to get flat peaches made of glutinous rice and hung on trees. The peaches are symbols of good luck and happiness.

Qiyanqiao Town, Benzhai and Yunshantun

Qiyanqiao, 16 km east of Anshun City, is a fairly large area where the Ming soldiers' descendants live in compact communities. In the town, visitors can find castles. Qiyanqiao is also famous for its local opera. During the Spring Festival and the Rice Flower Festival, which falls in the seventh month of the lunar calendar, local operas and the Flower Lantern Opera are

1. A vivid and lifelike field opera mask
2. Most residences in Benzhai are built of stone. There are no windows on the walls, only small embrasures
3. All characters of the lantern opera are performed by men
4. Originally a ritual of soldiers in the Ming Dynasty, the field opera can be performed anywhere in the stone castles, such as lanes, empty ground, and fields outside the castle
5. The strange back of a field opera performer's costume

Distribution of Stone Castles

In the early Ming Dynasty, Pudingwei (present day Anshun) was designated an important place for garrison troops to open up wilderness for growing food grains. With Anshun as the centre, the Tunbao people are now distributed through central Guizhou, including a part of Bijie Prefecture to the north, Changshun County in Qiannan Prefecture and Wangmo County in Qianxinan Prefecture to the south, and Liupanshui to the west. They also live in some places in Yunnan Province and Myanmar. The troops were mainly stationed in Anshun, Pingba, Qingzhen, Changshun, Puding and Zhenning.

Originally "Tun" and "Bao" referred to different things. "Tun" was a name of a military unit; and "Bao" referred to commercial quarters established after the Ming Dynasty adopted the policy of letting merchants settle in Guizhou to promote the economic development of the locality. Local people gradually called the combination of military outposts and commercial quarters "Tunbao".

performed. The local opera features acrobatic fighting; and the Flower Lantern Opera focuses on singing and acting. Male actors play both male and female roles in the opera.

Benzhai, under the jurisdiction of Qiyanqiao Town, is a simple, ancient village, where all civilian houses are solidly built with brick walls and stone roofs. The walls of the stone houses feature embrasures, as does a seven-storey fortress. All these are in keeping with the traditions left over by the troops stationed here in ancient times. Yunshantun is located in the gorge of Mt. Yunjiu, four kilometres from Qiyanqiao Town, and about 20 km from Anshun City. Ancient Yunshantun is just like a living "museum" of military outpost culture. Strategically located and with difficult access, Yunshantun has a well-preserved ancient fortress, a Ming Dynasty street, and stone fortress gates, city walls and sentry boxes scattered around the village. A typical ancient military facility, it was easy to guard and difficult to attack. The theatre, the Temple to the God of Wealth, the ruins of the Deshengchang Drugstore and several dozen civilian houses in Yunshantun are all well preserved, displaying characteristic architecture of the Ming and Qing Dynasties.

Ancient Tianlong Town

A town with transport facilities, Tianlong lies at the junction of Pingba County and Anshun City, and by the Guiyang-Huangguoshu Highway.

An ancient post road over 100 metres long goes through Tianlong. In times gone by, this road, flanked by small shops run by locals, was a typical commercial centre. Some of the old shops still exist today. So we can image that several hundred years ago, the old post road of Tianlong Town bustled with many merchants from all over the country.

Tianlong has 1,250 households and a population of over 5,000. As a key junction on the route west to Yunnan, the town gained a posthouse where couriers changed horses or rested, in the Shunyuan reign period of the Yuan Dynasty (1279—1368). In the Ming Dynasty (1368—1644), a large number of troops were stationed in the town and its surrounding areas, making it an important military fort. Today visitors can still see some ruined military defence works in the surrounding mountains, and unusual civilian houses. In the Ming Dynasty, a weapons manufacturing workshop, or ordnance factory, was located at Mt. Tiantai; some beacon towers were constructed on Mt. Yandui; and ancient city walls were built at the foot of Mt. Tiantai. During the tumultuous years of the reigns of Emperor Qianfeng and Emperor Tongzhi in the Ming Dynasty (1368—1644), ramparts, embrasures, peep holes and apertures, and forts were built on Mt. Longyan. These days broken walls can still be seen. All these give people a picture of the strong military defence works of ancient times. Visitors will gasp in admiration at its large scale and excellent architectural techniques.

Other Tourist Attractions

The areas where the Tunbao people live in compact communities are located in the famous scenic district of Guizhou Province — close to the Huangguoshu and Dragon Palace scenic areas. There are the Huangguoshu Waterfalls, Tianxin Stone Forest Scenic Zone, Fuhe Karst Cave, and Longgong (Dragon Palace). Tourists can also pay a visit to the village of the Bouyei people.

Transport

As a matter of fact, the places where the ancestors of the Tunbao people lived after their expedition to Guizhou are in some of the province's rare level areas. The modern Tunbao people mainly live in Anshun City with its flat terrain and transport facilities, not far from the Guiyang-Huangguoshu Highway.

To visit the stone castles, most tourists fly to Guiyang City, the capital of Guizhou Province, followed by a two-hour bus ride to Anshun City. From there, many scheduled buses and minibuses go to the different towns and outposts. However it is not so convenient for tourists to get to Jiuxi, Benzhai and Yunshantun. Public buses go directly to Jiuxi and Benzhai and Yunshantun, but tourists must take a taxi or a minibus to get to Yunshantun.

Tourists can also go directly to all the outposts from Guiyang. Tianlongtun, which is closest to Guiyang, will be the first choice for most tourists.

Translated by Kuang Peihua

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Accommodation

Tunbao does not provide lodging service, tourists are suggested to stay in Guiyang or Anshun.

City	Name	Star	Add	Tel	Fax	Postcode
Guiyang	Guizhou Hotel	****	66 Beijing Rd, Guiyang	(851) 6823888	(851) 6824397	550004
	Guiyang Jinzhu Hotel	****	2 Yan'an Rd E, Guiyang	(851) 6825888	(851) 6822994	550001
	Guiyang Shenqi Hotel	****	1 Guikai Rd, Guiyang	(851) 6771888	(851) 6771688	550004
	Guizhou Bodun Hotel	****	18 Yan'an Rd E, Guiyang	(851) 5827888	(851) 5823118	550001
	Guiyang Baicheng Hotel	****	246 Zhonghua Rd S, Guiyang	(851) 5866888	(851) 5824985	550001
	Guilong Hotel	****	52 Shenqi Rd, Guiyang	(851) 5593888	(851) 5593898	550001
	Guizhou Xianhua Hotel	****	1 Huanan Rd, Guiyang	(851) 5867888	(851)5873010	550001
	Guiyang Jinqiao Hotel	***	24 Ruijin Rd C, Guiyang	(851) 5829953	(851) 5825317	550002
	Guizhou Yunyan Hotel	***	169 Beijing Rd, Guiyang	(851) 6822977	(851) 6823324	550001
Anshun	Anshun Zheng'an Hotel	***	90 km from Guihuang Rd, Anshun	(853) 3296888 (ext 3221)	(853) 3320247	561000
	Anshun Xixiushan Hotel	***	63 Nanhua Rd, Anshun	(853) 3223900	(853) 2213027	561000
	Zhenning Huangguoshu Hotel	***	Administration office of Huangguoshu Scenic Area	(853) 3592110	(853) 3592111	561208
	Anshun Nationality Hotel	**	67 Tashan Rd E, Anshun	(853) 3222500	(853) 3222621	561000
	Longgong Hotel	**	Longgong, Anshun	(853) 3661488	(853) 3661014	561000

1. The Tunbao women are skilful in making handicrafts, such as embroidered shoes
2. Children of the stone castles start learning martial arts and field operas at an early age. They call this dressing-up "Zhu Yuanzhang", the name of the first Ming Dynasty emperor
3. During the Peach Festival, women of Tianlongbao will carry out complex religious ceremonies
4. The classic "Yan Wu Tang" is one of the places for the Tunbao people to perform field operas
5. Tunbao residences seen from afar
6. Traditionally dressed children taking part at a festival of the Tianlong Tunbao

6

Rejuvenation with Chinese Medicinal Herbs

Enjoying Spas in Zhuhai

Photos by Chan Yat Nin Article by Chu Kit Model: Idy

A foot-spa for traditional herbal medicines is popular among the Chinese. But not many have tried a Chinese herbal bath. Now, at the Medicine Valley health resort recently established at Zhuhai in Guangdong Province, clients can be refreshed physically and mentally by the ancient spa treatment using traditional Chinese herbal medicine in a natural environment.

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The idea of a spa using traditional Chinese medicinal herbs is said to have originated at the court of the Han Dynasty 2,000 years ago. The emperor and his relatives bathed in water mixed with traditional Chinese medicine to expand their blood vessels, improve circulation and stabilise metabolism. In the Tang Dynasty (618—907), this bathing treatment developed further. In his medical book, Thousand Gold Prescriptions, Doctor Sun Simao, the "King of Medicine" who lived to the ripe old age of 141, offered several prescriptions for medicinal baths. Members of the Tang royal family, like Lady Yang, Princess Taiping and Princess Yonghe, all took baths under Dr. Sun's instructions.

Though it had not been proved the three beauties owed their fairy-like looks to the medicinal baths, people became increasingly interested in the use of herbal medicine in baths. The Medicine Valley health resort provides comprehensive services for its clients covering diet, herbal baths and medical treatment.

Bathing with a Doctor's Prescription

The health resort is nestled at the foot of Santaishi (Three Terrace Stone) Hill, on the west side of the Yuanming New Garden. More than 30 bathing pools are scattered up and down the hill over an area of 20,000 square metres. Its wooden cottages, stream and bridge blend happily with the natural environment. The traditional-style building at the foot of the hill contains such facilities as health treatment rooms, guestrooms, indoor bathing pools and changing rooms. The tranquil atmosphere makes it an ideal resort for both relaxation and treatment.

Don't rush to change and go bathing as soon as you arrive at the

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1. You can have a personalised bath prescribed by a doctor. The charge varies from 38 yuan to 68 yuan
2. Doctors from the Yunnan Provincial Chinese Medicine Research Centre treat patients and provide advice at the health resort
3. Tang Dynasty beauty Lady Yang is said to have favoured this pale green bath water called Huarong Soup
4. In the Herbal King's Cave, herbal medicine drips from the ceiling

resort. Instead you see a doctor first and let him or her check you over and work out a prescription for your bath. The traditional Chinese medicine doctors hail from the Yunnan Provincial Chinese Medicine Research Centre. Two associate principal doctors are on duty every day. After examining the physical condition of clients, they draw up prescriptions for each individual and the service staff prepare the baths accordingly. There are nine types of bathing prescriptions, each with a beautiful name and a different price. The doctor helps you choose the one suitable for you.

Exotic Bath in a Cave

If you don't like the idea of a private bath, you can go to the public bathing pool for more fun. Though you can choose a herbal bath in your room, from my personal experience the pleasure doesn't compare with bathing in the open air. With the latter, you can enjoy both the spa and the natural surroundings. The pools all contain running water that has been heated to 40~50°C and had different herbal medicine soups added. While bathing, you are surrounded by the refreshing fragrance of the herbs.

The most distinctive feature of the resort is its Herbal King's Cave. Upon entering the dark cave, I found a grotto of artificial stalactites where a huge herbal pool occupied most of the space. Dark brown bathing water dripping from a bamboo tube hung from the ceiling, gave off a strong herbal aroma. A woman manager told me the architects found this natural cave during the construction of the project and decided to convert it into an unusual bathing pool. Those who choose to bath in the cave all believe in the effects of the water.

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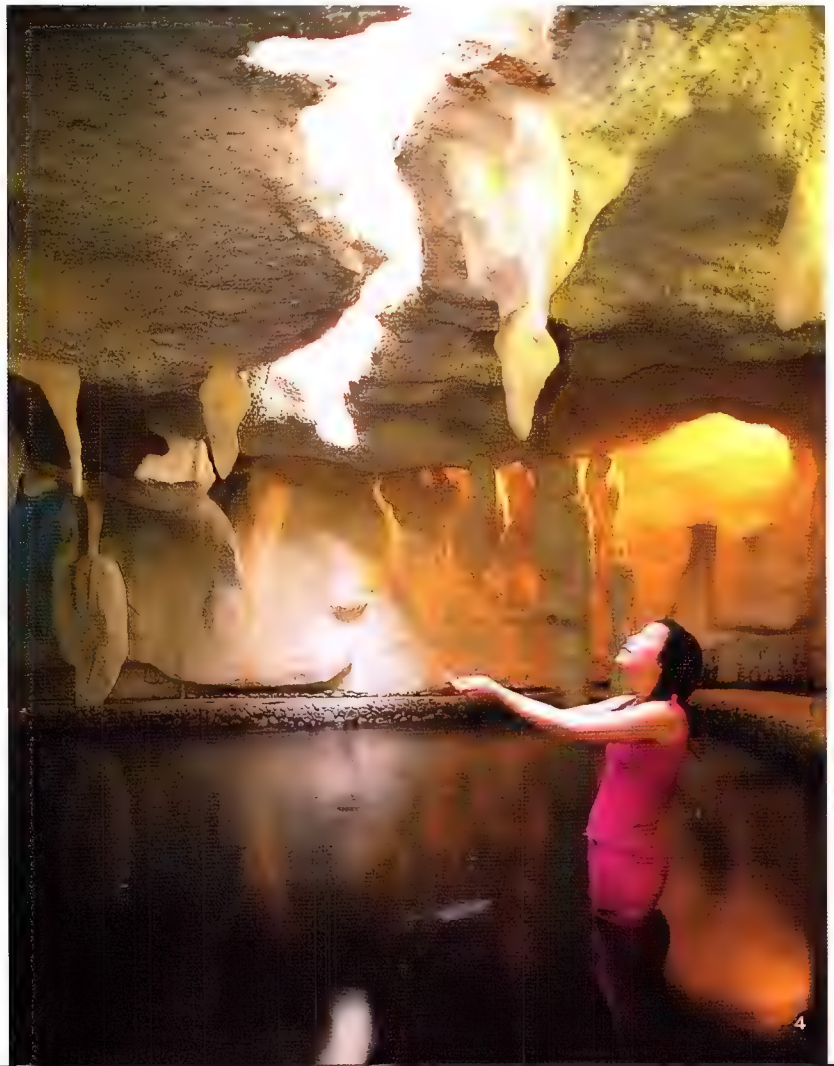
The terrace also contains pools including one filled with lingzhi (*Ganoderma lucidum*) herbal extract, one for foot massage and one for romantic lovers. While bathing in these pools, customers are served cool tea to rid the body of toxins and nourish the skin. The service staff, both men and women, are dressed in Tang costumes, and take first-class care of their clients.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Quartet of Special Treatments

"Yangsheng Guan", or the Health Treatment Hall, is another attraction at the resort. When you are warmed through and pink-faced after the baths, you should visit this centre to receive such traditional Chinese medical treatments as massage, acupuncture, cupping and foot massage. The unique Four-step Treatment was devised by Dr. Shen Jiaji, famous throughout China as an expert in traditional medicine. The program includes ear-point pressure, egg-rolling, medicinal heating and massage. The doctor checks on your ailments before choosing appropriate points for acupuncture and massage. The complete treatment takes an hour. For ear-point pressure, the doctor places pills made from medicinal herbs on the acupuncture points of the ear and presses them. This treatment is good for patients suffering from insomnia or migraines. According to one of the doctors, some of his patients who had endured sleep problems for years, fell sound asleep within minutes of receiving the treatment. The eggs used in the egg-rolling

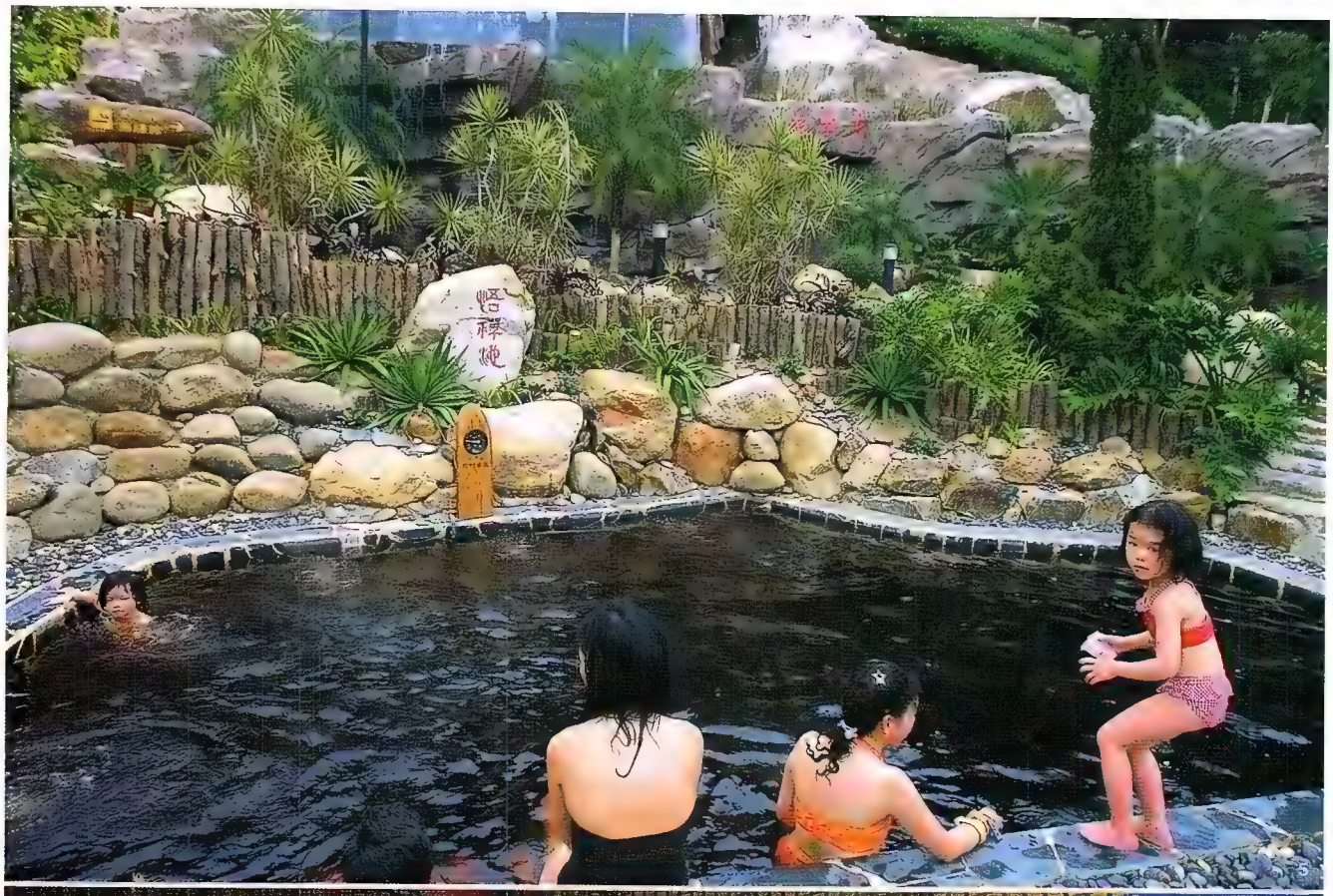
Four-step Treatment

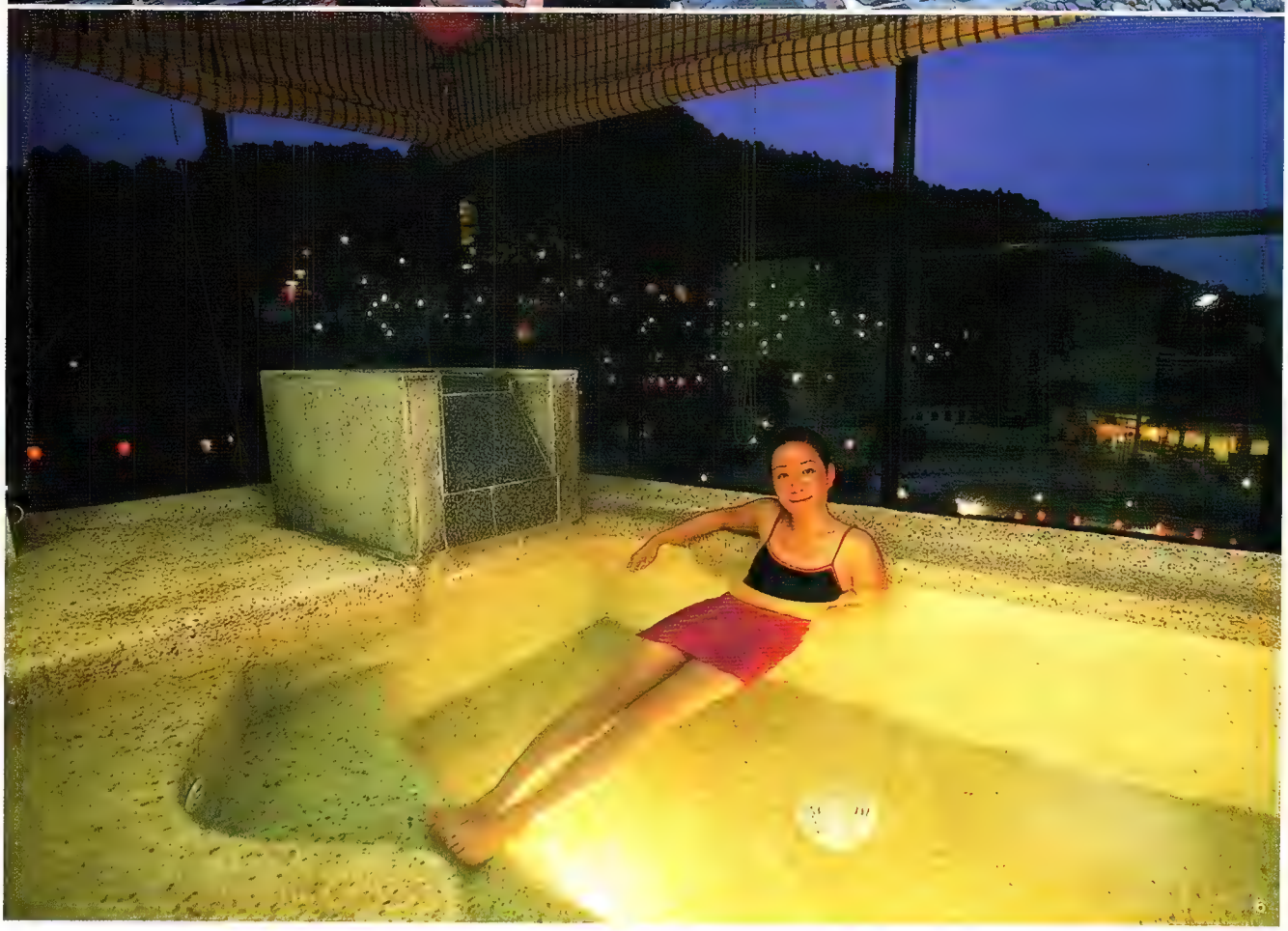
- **Step 1: Ear-point Pressure (10 minutes)**
  Theory: Certain points or areas of the ear correspond to an organ or part of the body. By pressing those points, the body's circulation can be improved and the functions of each organ regulated.
- **Step 2: Egg-rolling Treatment (10 minutes)**
  Theory: Rolling a hot egg acts like a massage, with the medicine entering the body through the skin. It helps improve circulation and breathing.
- **Step 3: Medicinal Heating Treatment (accompanies other treatments during the whole process)**
  Theory : The medicines enter the body through the skin and stimulate the nervous system. They help warm the body and strengthen organ function.
- **Step 4: Massage Treatment (40 minutes)**
  Theory: Massage relieves the joints, improves the body's organs and circulation system, and strengthens immunity.

* Charge for the complete treatment: 88 yuan.
Charges for Other Treatments:
Acupuncture: 28 yuan (one treatment);
Cupping, scraping, medicinal heating, moxibustion using ginger, ear-point pressure, egg-rolling: all 18 yuan for one treatment.

1. Moxibustion treatment is unique to Chinese medicine. Burning crushed Chinese mugwort leaves spread on a slice of ginger positioned near one's navel, relieves stomach upsets
2. Ear-point pressure helps insomnia and migraines, and the pills can stay in place on the ears for two or three days
3. Those who prefer keeping out of the sun can enjoy a bath in this huge indoor pool
4. From inside the Chuanyun Tower, one can enjoy a panoramic view through the windows
5. This kind of dark bathing water is different from hot springs water and gives off herbal aromas
6. From the bathing pool in a VIP room, guests can watch an outdoor performance held at 9 p.m. every evening

treatment are boiled with such herbal medicines as "fangfeng" (*Saposhnikovia divaricata*), green onion white and Chinese mugwort leaves. When the egg is rolled across the body, it eases arthritis and is good for skin care. Medicinal heating involves heated packs of medicinal herbs collected from Yunnan being placed on different parts of the body like the neck, shoulders and stomach. During the one-hour treatment, the medicine works through the client's skin and muscles to help improve circulation and the function of various organs. Afterwards the doctor gives a massage according to the client's physical condition. No wonder everyone feels refreshed after receiving this Four-step Treatment.





Healthy Herbal Meals

Don't imagine that this is all your trip entails. Your visit to the health resort will not be complete until you try a medicinal meal there. The restaurant situated by the pool downhill offers food cooked with medicinal herbs and its menu changes with the seasons. According to Mr. Wang, manager of the restaurant, early spring is the time to nourish one's kidneys, so you can choose from dishes of pork slices cooked with ginseng, frog meat lightly fried with tianqi, or eel boiled with the bark of eucommia. Other specialties include zhusi chicken soup cooked for five hours with ginseng and pilose antler, rice fried with dates and longan and medicinal wine. This kind of meal is thoroughly enjoyable.

When evening falls, you can rent a room for the night. The resort has 18 guestrooms, including several VIP rooms offering beautiful mountain views and a private bathing pool. If you feel the daytime baths are not enough for you, you can ask for medicinal packs from the staff and bathe with your friends in the moonlight. Wouldn't that be a unique experience?

Translated by Gloria Shang

1. **Savouring a herbal meal after a bath is extra good for you**
2. **Stewed chicken with rhizome of chuanxiong (*Ligusticum wallichii*) Chinese angelica, 30 yuan, helps stimulate breathing and circulation, and regulates menstrual function**
3. **Frog deep-fried with pseudo ginseng, 30 yuan, helps to eliminate blood stasis, stops bleeding, swelling and pain**
4. **Stewed bark of eucommia with rice field eel, 35 yuan, is effective in relieving rheumatic pain and improving bodily functions**
5. **Rice stir-fried with red dates, longan, and preserved meat**
6. **The Hong Kong funded Traditional Chinese Medicine Valley health resort provides a tranquil environment and excellent services**

Medicine Valley Facts

- **Address:** Lanpu, Jiuzhou Boulevard, Zhuhai, on the west side of the Yuanming New Garden
- **Tel:** [illegible]
- **Admissions:** 99 yuan/ adult, 49 yuan/ child, including all outdoor and indoor public bathing pools
- **Opening hours:** 24 hours, but outdoor pools close between 1~6 a.m.
- **Transport:** [illegible] Zhuhai and takes about an hour. For details, please call: 2858 3878, or see http://www.cksp.com.hk. A taxi from Jiuzhou Port at Zhuhai to the health [illegible] or 60.

- **Package Tours:**

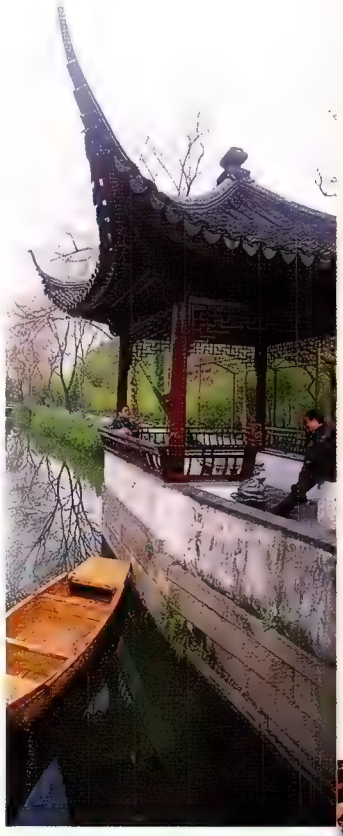
Guestroom	Ordinary days	Fri.~Sun.	Holidays
Standard	HK$588	HK$738	HK$808
VIP	HK$908	HK$1,028	HK$1,128

* Tour includes:

1. One night's accommodation for two in a guestroom
2. Breakfast for two
3. Two entry tickets (for unlimited entries during the day of stay)

For booking: (852) 2301 3188

May



18/4~18/5

A one-month-long activity, the **Suzhou International Tourism Festival** held in East China's Jiangsu Province will be jointly sponsored by the China Natinal Tourism Administration and the city government. It features some 30 programmes showcasing the unique landscape, folklore, silk manufacturing and culture of Suzhou, known as "the Venice of the Orient". A food fair, a painting exhibit, a dragon boat contest, an international photographic exhibition and a tourism trade fair will also be staged. The South China city hosted some 890,000 foreign and 20 million domestic tourists in 2002, making it the 8th most popular tourist city in China.

April~June

Season of Culture, the theme of this year's **Taipei Traditional Arts Festival**, brings to you experiences of many of Taipei's cultures. Taipei is a modern city that is home to people from many different cultures, yet the locals have their roots firmly in the past. Each spring this festival presents traditional arts in the genres of song, music, dance and drama. The festival has become recognized as being one of the city's landmark artistic events. The festival will be held in Chungshan Hall, a second grade listed heritage building. Website: www.taipei.gov.tw/English/

1/5

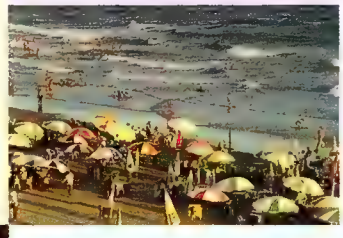
The **International Yangtse River Crossing Challenge**, the longest one in China, will be held in Wuhan, capital city of Central China's Hubei Province. Participants, who should be healthy and younger than 50 years old as required, will start from Hanyangmen at the river's southern bank for the destination some 2,000 metres away in Nan'anzui at the northern bank. The first 25 finishers each in the men's and women's events will be awarded with prize money ranging from US$200 to 3,000 and certificates for their results, while the top three mens' and women's swimmers will be awarded with trophies.

25/4~7/5

During the two-week-long **Culinary & Travel Festival** held in Xi'an and Xianyang, two Shaanxi Province's cities, visitors can experience colourful events including a grand united exhibition of culinary culture, introduction of labels of tourist dishes, as well as forums discussing the development of hotels and dining industries in the two cities. Lots of famous local snacks and produce will be for sale. At the closing ceremony and prize-giving night on May 7, there will also be a marvelous live show making the renowned dishes. the **First Xi'an & Xianyang Tourist Districts Expo'** will also be hosted introducing nearly 200 tourist resorts within Xi'an and Shaanxi.

April~October

In order to promote travel industry in northwestern Yunnan, southwestern Sichuan, and southeastern Tibet, the three areas have joined to held the first six-month-long **Shangri-La Travel Festival & Meili Snow Mountain Culture Year**. From April onwards, a series of events showcasing the precious natural and cultural resources in these three areas will be kicked off. Highlights of the activities are circling around the Meili Snow Mountain, the "Bless from Shangri-La" Music Concert, welcoming Buddha and grand praying ceremony, Meili Snow Mountain World Model Contest, and "Xuanzijie", a large music and dance festival.



May

With its new image, Yintan, or the **Silver Beach**, a tourist site in Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Region once suffered from serious pollution due to overcrowd visitors and inadequate development plan, will be opened for tourists again from May 1. A total of 39 hotels and a 1,800-metre-long dyke built along the coastal area have been dismantled. On the Yintan Road Central located at a distance from the beach is now built with many multi-functional tourist facilities, featuring youngsters' activities, recreation, eco-travel, beach art, beach sports and water sports, while a large number of trees are planted along the beach.

Protecting the Tibetan Antelopes

— Encounters at the Soinamdagyi Nature Reserve Station

Article by Dianna Lau (photos provided by the Soinamdagyi Nature Reserve Station)

Since 2001, the Soinamdagyi (known as Suonandajie in Mandarin) Nature Reserve Station, China's first non-government environmental protection station, built on the edge of the no-man's land in Hol Xil along the Qinghai-Tibet Highway, has been recruiting volunteers from the mainland. As a result of being encouraged to devote a month of their lives to environmental protection, some people have spent a rich 30 days at the station, some have changed the direction of their lives, and some have left their souls in Hol Xil forever...

Winding up an unforgettable trip to the Qinghai-Tibet Plateau last August, I was about to leave Lhasa, capital city of Tibet, when I remembered the Soinamdagyi Nature Reserve Station① on the Qinghai-Tibet Highway. I decided to postpone my departure as I realized I couldn't resist the temptation to visit the mysterious place. So I hopped on to a sleeper bus heading for Golmud.

Wolves in Hol Xil

From my research I found out that the nature reserve station was located alongside the Qinghai-Tibet Highway②, in the section between the Wudaoliang and Kunlun Mountains. I asked the bus conductor gingerly: "Can I stop in the middle of the trip? When will we get to the Wudaoliang?" The reply came: "You can get off in the middle but I can't tell you the exact time of arrival. Perhaps around 2:00 during the night." My heart sank as it was hard to imagine what a solitary traveller should do in pitch darkness at night in the middle of nowhere. The Wudaoliang Mountains, some 5,000 metres above sea level, are notorious as being the worst place along the highway for provoking serious altitude sickness in people. There is even a saying: "Once at the Wudaoliang, it is hard to see one's mum and dad again." Fortunately, I had been touring in the highland region and was by now somewhat acclimatised. What I feared however were the wolves. I had been told that Hol Xil③ was rampant with wolves and even heard stories about road workers being killed by wolves.

I inquired from the driver and learned that the station was close to the road and once there he would alert me. Since the road was under repair, he was in no position to know exactly when we would arrive.

On the first day, the bus journeyed on with many stops along the way. Though the conditions aboard were not very comfortable, the day passed by uneventfully. When I woke up early the next morning, I became very alert, fearing the driver might forget to tell me we had arrived. I kept going to his seat to remind him. The trip that morning was quite smooth and the driver said happily: "We probably will arrive at about 2:00 in the afternoon, if there are no emergencies on the way." This lifted my spirits. I wouldn't need to worry about wolves if I arrived during daytime. After midday, however, the road conditions changed as if governed by the unstable and unpredictable highland weather. We eased forward slowly. Sometimes we had to stop for several hours. No longer holding out much hope, the driver urged me to go back to my sleeper berth to rest.

Arriving at the Station Late at Night

When the fiery sun eventually disappeared below the horizon, my hopes sank with it. Now the bus was shrouded in total darkness with only dim lights gleaming from the tents of road workers. The temperature had dropped too and the wailing wind carried the howls of wolves.

Dejectedly, I wondered whether I should still go to the nature reserve station. Even if the station was right next to the road, who could guarantee the hungry wolves would let me take those few steps

from the bus to the station building? In the no-man's land of Hol Xil, I couldn't expect the luck I had enjoyed on the trip so far as I had always encountered kind-hearted people in emergencies.

Late in the evening, around 10:30 p.m., I finally saw the outline of the nature reserve station and the sight renewed my hope and confidence. The driver let me get off only after I confirmed this was my destination. Before I departed, other passengers on the bus couldn't help asking: "Why have you come so far to this dark and cold place?" For a second, I didn't know what to say. All I could manage was "I'm here to visit some friends." (In fact, as the station had no means of communication with the outside world, the people there weren't expecting me and my arrival would be a total surprise to them.)

Two Dark Shadows Approach

The nature reserve station was across the road and behind it the Hol Xil National Nature Reserve④. In my imagination the endless stretch of darkness was filled with wild wolves ready to attack at any time. As it was nearly 11 p.m., people at the station had gone to bed. All I could do was to feel my way in the dark.

As soon as I set foot on the territory of the station, two giant dark shadows suddenly moved toward me. At that moment, my only thought was wolves and instinctively I waved my camera bag at them, till their ferocious barking told me they were two dutiful watchdogs. Though things were not as bad as I had feared, they were not good either, since Tibetan dogs are no less ferocious than wolves. They circled me, confident in their power. Feeling in danger, I tried to shout toward the station but nothing happened. So I stopped advancing and began to retreat. The dogs however became more daring and closed in on me. I used all the strength I could muster, waving my bag and tactfully "negotiating" with them. Eventually I was forced to pull back from crossing the road and instead retreated on to the uneven ground

1. Mother and baby Tibetan antelopes can be seen on the grassland of Hol Xil in summer
2. Volunteers observe wildlife on the border region of Hol Xil
3. Occasionally tourists on bicycles visit the nature reserve station (by Dianna Lau)

of a construction site. As all my attention was focused on dealing with the watchdogs, several times I landed on the muddy ground. Later with hindsight, I laughed at the awkward situation I found myself in for the first time, but at that point ...

Fortunately "God never shuts all doors", and I saw a light shining from a row of tents at the edge of the construction site. I looked upon it in the same way as a sailor on a storm-tossed sea regards a lighthouse. Suddenly, I was invigorated and staggered toward the tents.

Too Touched to Speak

"Can I sleep here with you?" A person becomes quite shameless when there's no other choice.

The young man in front me was unexpectedly calm. Without saying a word, he took me into the tent and cleared his bed for me. Quickly he boiled water, making me some tea and noodles. When I had finished eating, he brought me a basin of hot water to wash in. Finding all this almost hard to believe, I was too touched to speak.

The young man was Wang Yong from Nanjing. An engineer with the Nanjing Chemicals Group, he had recently arrived here to take part in a project and would return home in a few months. Learning I had come because of the nature reserve station, he grew animated and told me he was familiar with the people manning the station and had great respect for them for their spirit and strength of character. I asked him why he shown no vigilance toward me, a midnight gatecrasher. He said unhesitatingly: "On the highlands, everybody's part of the family. Besides you're a girl and I have every obligation to take care of you. Since you are not afraid of a man, why should I be afraid of you?"

The following morning, I crawled out of the cold bed and went outside the tent. The darkness outside had given way to a snowy white world. I saw Wang Yong walking toward me with breakfast.

"I have prepared egg and hot milk for you. I hear people in Hong Kong love this kind of breakfast." At that moment I realized there are situations where no words can appropriately express your feelings. This was one of those situations.

Wang Yong personally took me over to the nature reserve station after breakfast. The two huge dogs charged toward us. I knew them from last night. The difference this time however was that they showed great delight and excitement, not ferocity, at the visitors. The

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big yellow dog was particularly friendly to me, waving its tail and standing up in my arms. It was actually taller than me when standing on its hind legs. Its name was "Yellow Cucumber", a member of the nature reserve station and loyal in its affections to the people there.

Though it was still early, some of the volunteers had already gone out on inspection trips and the exhibition room was totally deserted. Wang Yong went directly into the dorms and roused Yang Xin who had been sound asleep. I still remember the total disbelief on Yang's face when he saw me. Soon we got to know each other and he told me in detail how the station operates and about the work of the volunteers.

About the Soinamdagyi Nature Reserve Station

In 1997, Yang Xin, a leader of "Green River", an environmental protection organization, raised funds from the charity sale of his book The Souls of the Yangtse and set up the Soinamdagyi Nature Reserve Station. It was the first of its kind operated by a non-government organization at the source of the Yangtse. Since its founding, the station has become the frontline base for the local government in the fight against poachers of Tibetan antelopes. On the edge of the no-man's land of Hol Xil and 4,500 metres above sea level, the station has not only promoted ecological protection but has aroused public concern for the environment at the source of the Yangtse and the fate of Tibetan antelopes.

In 2001, the station introduced a system of volunteers. It accepts 30 volunteers a year from all over the country to work a month each at the station in 12 batches, conducting publicity, education and training related to environmental protection, and surveys of wildlife numbers and herds.

Those interested in making donations to "Green River" can send money or cheques (convertible in China) through the China Construction Bank to account number: 261023867 (Xinhong Road Branch).

Donations recipient: Sichuan Provincial Green River Society for the Promotion of Environmental Protection

Address: 27 Jianshe Nanxin Road, Chengdu, Sichuan Province, China (Postcode: 610051) Website: www.green-river.org

Extraordinary Mission

The three volunteers at the station in August came from Xiamen and Shenzhen. Chosen from over 1,000 applicants around the country, they have to stay there at least 30 days, devoting themselves to environmental protection work. They have to follow up the work after returning home.

I was lucky enough to stay awhile at the station, spending two extraordinary days there.

Morning: Around 7:00, volunteers climb aboard the single old jeep to conduct an investigation of wildlife several kilometres from the station. From June to August is the migration period for Tibetan antelopes after the females have given birth to their young in the Hol Xil region. During this period, they can even be seen on the highway. One of the important tasks for the volunteers is to record their numbers and whereabouts at specific times and places for later study.

Noon: Those volunteers staying behind in the station take care of visitors. The latter are usually travelling between Golmud and Lhasa in groups or individually in hired vehicles. (Individuals travelling in public buses rarely get off here because they don't want to waste their long distance bus fares and one can never be certain about catching a bus later on. When I left the station, I waited by the roadside for a bus. In the end, Mr. Zhado stopped a luxury coach for me which took me to the Golmud Railway Station free of charge.)

Strictly speaking, the station isn't a tourist attraction and therefore does not charge an admission fee. Drivers plying the Qinghai-Tibet Highway, however, love to bring travellers here. One reason is that it gives them a break during the long journey and the other is that they highly appreciate and respect what people do at the nature reserve station and want more of the public to share their sentiments.

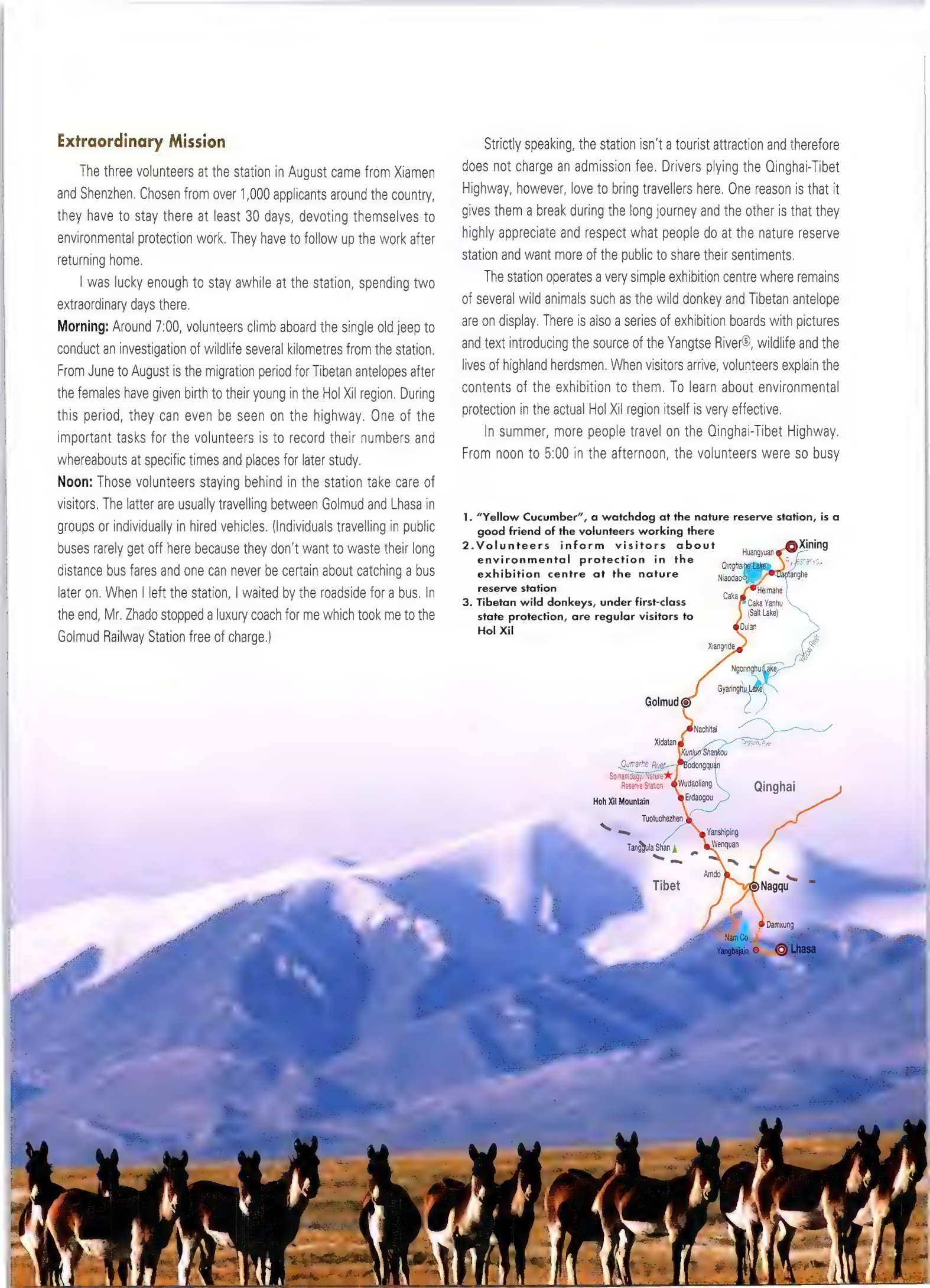
The station operates a very simple exhibition centre where remains of several wild animals such as the wild donkey and Tibetan antelope are on display. There is also a series of exhibition boards with pictures and text introducing the source of the Yangtse River[5], wildlife and the lives of highland herdsmen. When visitors arrive, volunteers explain the contents of the exhibition to them. To learn about environmental protection in the actual Hol Xil region itself is very effective.

In summer, more people travel on the Qinghai-Tibet Highway. From noon to 5:00 in the afternoon, the volunteers were so busy

1. "Yellow Cucumber", a watchdog at the nature reserve station, is a good friend of the volunteers working there

2. Volunteers inform visitors about environmental protection in the exhibition centre at the nature reserve station

3. Tibetan wild donkeys, under first-class state protection, are regular visitors to Hol Xil



Accommodation: Apart from the exhibition hall and a meeting room, the nature reserve station has a house serving as bedrooms. The house has three units accommodating 8~10 people. The station is built with solar energy and wind power generation equipment, toilets and a viewing tower. In Hol Xil, this is a relatively comfortable place.

1. The large number of vehicles travelling on the Qinghai-Tibet Highway has created the most serious man-made barrier for migrating Tibetan antelopes

attending to visitors they sometimes had no time for lunch. Often visitors from Beijing, Guangzhou, Inner Mongolia, Ningxia, Shaanxi, Shanghai, Suzhu and Hong Kong fully pack the exhibition hall. Even though not every visitor is an attentive listener (many are satisfied with taking a photo to prove they have been to the place), they all generously spend more than 200 yuan on a photographic book on the source of the Yangtse River to support the work of the station.

Afternoon: As the visitors thinned out, the volunteers began to sort out the day's takings and expenses or clean up the station. Some went to the Qinghai-Tibet Railway⑥ construction site to spread publicity among the construction workers. This was an important new mission, for the huge railway project is bringing in thousands of workers from outside the region. The sudden influx of people into the highlands could easily disturb the already delicate ecology. Fortunately the volunteers have kept a sound channel of communication open. Volunteers also have to disseminate knowledge on environmental protection to herdsmen's families living in the depths of the highlands. Significantly, all the publicity material is written in Tibetan, breaking down the language barrier.

Evening: The exhibition centre closed at 6 p.m. and supper was served at 7 p.m. I was lucky to have yak stew with small potatoes prepared by Yang Xin. This was a rare luxury as supplies are tight on the highlands. At 8 p.m., people retired to their own rooms after the sun had set. I talked through the night with Qiu Li, a volunteer with whom I shared a room. I was impressed with this young volunteer's deep commitment to environmental protection and saw hope for the future of Hol Xil.

Nights on the highlands are very cold. Even though it was summer, snow began to fall in the middle of the night. In winter, temperatures can drop to -40°C.

Food: Rice porridge was the staple food for breakfast. If you were lucky, you might get canned food brought by volunteers. For lunch and supper, rice was the staple food served with a plate of assorted vegetables. Occasionally construction workers bring over some meat. Some travellers also generously donate food they have brought with them. I had apples, watermelon and pancakes left behind by other travellers.

① **Soinamdagyi** (or Gysang Soinandaje) before his death was vice secretary of the CPC Committee, secretary of the West Work Committee and concurrently director of the county forestry office of Zhiduo County, Qinghai Province. He set up an anti-poaching brigade targeting mainly those who went into Hol Xil in large numbers to illegally hunt Tibetan antelopes after 1990. In the cold winter of 1994, though only lightly armed, he single-handedly fought 18 poachers near the Sun Lake in Hol Xil. He was killed in action. (See The Souls of the Yangtze, published by Lingnan Fine Art Publishing House)

② **The Qinghai-Tibet Highway**, one of the highest highways in the world, starts in Xining, capital of Qinghai, and ends in Lhasa, meandering for 2,000 km. A major transport artery linking the inland areas with Tibet, it carries 80 percent of the supplies Tibet needs. A section of the highway some 400 km long cuts across the source area of the Yangtse River.

③ **Hol Xil** (meaning a beautiful girl in Mongolian) is one of the major source regions of the Yangtze River, at 5,000 metres above sea level. The annual average temperature is -4°C and the air there is very thin. A haven for wildlife, the region is home to more than 230 species of animals including more than 20 species such as the Tibetan antelope, the wild yak, wild donkey and brown bear, all under first or second-class state protection.

④ **Hol Xil National Nature Reserve** is the world's third largest and China's largest no-man's land, located in an area between longitude 89°20'~93°50' east and latitude 33°05'~36°10'north. The main peak of the Kunlun Mountains stands to its east, separating the region from the Qaidam Basin. The region is bordered by the Tanggula Mountains to the south, the Tibet Autonomous Region to the west and the Qinghai-Tibet Highway to the east.

⑤ **The Yangtse** is the third largest river in the world and the largest in Asia. Springing from the Jianggudiru Glacier in the Tanggula Mountains, it is known section by section as the Tuotuohe, Tongtianhe, Jinshajiang and Changjiang. Its total length is 6,300 km. The lands covering 140,000 sq km at an altitude of 4,000 metres between the Kunlun and Tanggula mountains through which the Tuotuohe and Tongtianhe flow, are referred to as the source areas of the Yangtse. Of the three source rivers that merge to form the Yangtse, the Tuotuohe is the main one with the Damqu in the south and Qumar in the north. The Qumar originates from the no-man's land of Hol Xil. (See The Souls of the Yangtze)

⑥ **The Qinghai-Tibet Railway** will be the longest highland railroad in the world at the highest altitude. Starting from Xining in Qinghai and ending in Lhasa in Tibet, it will run for 1,956 km. From Golmud to Lhasa, the railway stretches 960 km across a region 4,000 metres above sea level. At the highest point, it crosses the Tanggula Mountains at a height of 5,072 metres. Construction of this section began in June 2001 and will take six years to complete.

Volunteers' Diary

- Name: Qiu Li (female)
- Background: Originally from Zhejiang, now a postgraduate student at the Biology Department of Xiamen University
- Motivation: Her first experience at the station left her deeply committed and with the same high ideals as other volunteers who built the station. So she decided to return to the university campus to study biology in the hope of making a contribution to the environment.
- Experience at the station:
  1st time: Summer 1998 (to help build the station)
  2nd time: Summer 2000 (as a volunteer)
  3rd time: Winter 2002 (as a volunteer)
- Reaction to being a volunteer: "Once I became a volunteer, I wanted to be one for the rest of my life."

Helping Tibetan Antelopes Cross the Highway

Every summer, Tibetan antelopes living deep in Hol Xil take their newly born babies on a long migration, fearlessly crossing all kinds of barriers, natural or man-made, to return to their homelands along the traditional route. (For detailed coverage on the Tibetan antelope, please see Issue 268 of *China Tourism*.)

In July, we conducted field investigations on wildlife once a week, driving by jeep on the Qinghai-Tibet Highway to record the number of animals between the Kunlun Mountain Pass and the Wudaoliang Mountains. In the last days of the month, we were surprised to discover a herd of more than 200 antelopes on the opposite side of the Qumar River. Once they had crossed the river, the greatest natural barrier on their migratory journey, they faced a difficult dilemma. They gathered on the west side of the Qinghai-Tibet Highway, waiting for the opportunity to cross it. With the highway under major repair, the Qinghai-Tibet Railway under construction and tourist numbers rising, vehicular movements on the highway day and night had increased several times over, leaving almost no interval in the traffic and creating the antelopes' greatest man-made barrier. I saw with my own eyes antelopes trying to cross the road but they had no sooner stepped on it, when they were pushed back by vehicles constantly dashing by. One group of animals made 38 attempts during a period of three hours but still could not cross the road. Dejectedly they returned to the wasteland of Hol Xil.

According to our statistics on traffic on the Qinghai-Tibet Highway, more than 100 vehicles drive along the road every hour on average. We consulted Feng Zuojian from the Zoology Institute of the Chinese Academy of Sciences and carried out field investigations at his suggestion. We then wrote "Suggestions on Taking Emergency Measures to Guarantee the Safe Migration of Tibetan Antelopes" and took it to the 12th Engineering Bureau of the Qinghai-Tibet Railway. We suggested that during the 10 days from August 8~18, construction vehicles stop running on the section of the highway between the 2,884~3,000 km markers from 6:30 to 7:30 in the morning and from 7:30 to 8:30 in the evening. The reply from the Qinghai-Tibet Railway headquarters was a great thrill for us, as they immediately instructed the construction sites to implement our suggestion. The climate allows only six months of construction for the railway per year, but in order to protect the Tibetan antelope, they were willing to adopt the suggestion from an NGO! We were really delighted.

From August 8~18, most of the railway construction trucks stopped running during the designated time slots as we had suggested. Other vehicles, however, continued to drive along the highway. As an NGO-run nature reserve station, we had no law enforcement powers and could not stop the vehicles from running. On the other hand, we had to do something to help Tibetan antelopes cross the road. The only solution was for us to stop the vehicles and try to impress the drivers with our sincerity. Not only would it help the animals, but also provide a rare opportunity to spread information on environmental awareness.

At 4:00 in the morning, when stars were still twinkling in the sky, we volunteers set off into a biting cold wind, heading for the Qumar River some 30 to 40 km away, to stop vehicles from running for an hour so the Tibetan antelopes could cross the highway. We held high a flag bearing the words "Green River" and waved down the vehicles together with the help of a group of supporters from Guangzhou University. When a vehicle stopped, we ran over and smiled to the driver before we spoke: "We are volunteers from the Soinamdagyi Nature Reserve Station. Those Tibetan antelopes wish to cross the highway. Will you please stop and wait for an hour (or 20, 30 or 40 minutes)? Tibetan antelopes wish you a safe journey!" Then we gave each driver a present for protecting the antelope made with two woven Chinese lucky knots and a poster of the animal sponsored by the

1. Qiu Li, a volunteer, promotes environmental protection among Tibetans living in the source region of the Yangtse River
2. Volunteers stop cars to let Tibetan antelopes cross the highway

International Fund Animal Protection. Perhaps because of our sincerity and warmth, or perhaps because of our beautiful gifts, we always managed to persuade the drivers. Virtually all of them did as we asked. When they realised we were volunteers, some drivers invited us to take shelter in their vehicles from the cold morning. Some even asked about joining the corps of volunteers. The response from drivers dispelled our concerns at disrupting normal traffic on the highway.

At 7:30 a.m., the period for reduced traffic ended. Standing by the road, we waved to dozens or even 100 vehicles, smiling to the drivers who smiled back. There were many vehicles and we spent a very long time waving. It was my longest experience of smiling and waving. When we saw off the last vehicle, my eyes filled with tears. When traffic resumed running, I looked for the footprints of Tibetan antelopes on both sides of the highway. If there were new footprints, it meant the animals had crossed the road. After walking several kilometres, I saw a large number of fresh footprints by the road, some large, some small in disoriented directions. On the other side of the highway, all the fresh footprints pointed in one direction. The Tibetan antelopes had crossed the highway! Tears of joy were running down my face. This was the best thing we could do for the antelopes.

(Article by Qiu Li)

- Name: Huang Zhongyuan (male)
- Background: A financial analyst for a securities company in Shenzhen
- Motivation: Wished to learn more about the ecological conditions of Hol Xil to spread information among more people.
- Time at the station: Early to late August 2002
- Reaction to being a volunteer: The month spent at the station was highly significant.

Reducing Life's Needs to a Minimum

When I first arrived at the nature reserve station, I didn't like the place. In the city, I can take a bath every day, chat with my friends on the telephone, sleep in a clean bedroom and enjoy a balanced diet. At the station none of those conditions was available and I had to reduce daily needs to a minimum. The staff here faced the cold gun barrels of poachers hungry for Tibetan antelopes and the challenge of severe winter cold and the solitude of being away from their families. In winter, the temperature falls to -40°C. It was so cold that halfway through washing your face, the towel is already frozen. To keep warm in the room, we burned animal dung we had collected. Canned food was the order of the day at the dinner table. We ate withered vegetables and stale bread with pickles.

The daily work at the station was monotonous but when travellers on the Qinghai-Tibet Highway praised us saying: "You're really wonderful," we were overwhelmed with happiness.

When I returned to Shenzhen and was asked by my friends what I thought of Hol Xil, I told them that urban populations had consumed the great bulk of the world's energy and it was time they slowed down their consumption. That way they would not have to face the possibility of looking for energy and resources in places like Hol Xil.

(Article by Huang Zhongyuan)

- Name: Liu Xin (female)
- Background: Part-time postgraduate student of international law at Shenzhen University
- Motivation: To do something good for mankind, become more environmentally aware, test one's survival skills and see that part of the world
- Time at the station: November 30~December 30, 2002

Life in Freezing Winter

When the cold winter wind blew, we had to stay indoors huddled around the stove, watching the wind blown sand outside and the occasional vehicle on the Qinghai-Tibet Highway.

Strictly speaking, Hol Xil had no water in winter, for all water there is turned to ice. The river by the nature reserve station had long been

frozen solid. Anyway the river water contained heavy metal elements and was harmful to one's health. We had to go and get water at a spring 30 km away.

(Article by Liu Xin)

- Name: Feng Yong (male, 21 years old)
- Background: A native of Sichuan. Once a soldier in Xinjiang. Experienced at living in the wilderness. Keen on protecting the environment
- Time at the station: November 2002

Gave His Life for Environmental Protection

At noon on November 30, Feng Yong and a few other volunteers set out from the nature reserve station in a jeep to pick up garbage and conduct environmental protection work. On the way, the jeep broke down and they had to walk several hours to get back to the station. Feng Yong went to the pipe laying construction site of the Southern Chemical Group opposite the station to seek help. The company immediately sent out Li Mingli, a driver, to go and help. The two of them took enough food and warm clothes and set off for the broken down jeep.

That night they did not return to the station. The next day they were found dead in the jeep from carbon monoxide poisoning. One theory was that they failed to extricate the broken jeep and they did not have enough fuel. During the night it was too cold to walk back to the station and so they sheltered in the vehicle. Possibly they died during their sleep when the temperature dropped to -30°C.

After the tragedy, Yang Xin, the president of the Green River Society, several volunteers, and people from the public security bureau, the hospital and the media helped with the aftermath, including setting up an accident assistance reserve fund for volunteers. Feng and Li's families received pensions donated from different quarters.

- Name: Liu Tuanxi (male)
- Background: Originally from Shaanxi, she now works for an IT company in Shenzhen.
- Experience at the station:
  1st time: June 30~August 3, 2001 (as a volunteer)
  2nd time: August 23~September 3, 2001 (as a volunteer)
  3rd time: Early December 2002 (to help with the tragedy's aftermath)
- Reaction to being a volunteer: "I have left my heart there and I will always work for the place."

Thoughts from the Cremation

There was no cremation centre at Golmud and people placed the deceased on used vehicle tyres to be ignited with firewood. That was how Feng Yong was cremated after his death. His mother rushed forward and was pulled away. Her screaming made the Gobi desert all the more desolate. Then the fire flared up and Feng's remains began to burn. Yang Xin, several volunteers and I myself burned imitation paper money for the dead nearby. Wind whirled away the paper money. Dust assailed my nostrils and smoke choked my eyes. In the bleak coldness, everything was burned to ashes four hours later.

The event left me totally stunned-life is so delicate.

(Article by Liu Tuanxi)

1. Female Tibetan antelopes on their migratory journey
2. Wild donkey droppings are the main source of fuel for heating in winter at the nature reserve station
3. Pieces of ice are an important source of water in winter. The photo shows Yang Xin, founder of the nature reserve station

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Since its setup, the nature reserve station had hosted more than 100 volunteers. After the tragic death of Feng Yong, many media questioned if volunteers should so blindly work for environmental protection despite such dire shortages of funding, materials and technology.

Yang Xin's comments: "Should we then wait till we have helicopters and imported cross-country vehicles before we go there to work? When Soinamdogyi worked there, conditions were much tougher but they did not stop working. The need to protect the environment at the source of the Yangtse River does not allow a moment's hesitation.","Volunteers like Feng Yong work there for a month without receiving a single cent in income. They even paid for their trip to the station. They did the job solely because of their convictions. In order to protect wildlife, they even gave up their own lives. People should respect and understand them instead of criticising them.","Volunteers are an important symbol of social progress. Only when a country's economic development has reached a certain point, only when people have enough to eat and wear, and only when the cultural achievements of a nation are at a certain level can volunteers emerge."

Translated by Huang Youyi

CULTURAL HERITAGE WALK IN MACAO

Photos & article by Chen Tianquan

Visitors to Macao not only can seek their fortune at a casino, but also appreciate the leisurely lifestyle of a small southern European town. Its 400 years of colonial history have left a wealth of classical European buildings and oriental characteristics. The Cultural Institute of the Macao Special Administrative Region (MSAR) government recently set up a cultural relics tourist trail, linking 12 historically valuable buildings. An application has been made through the central government to put this group of buildings on UNESCO's world cultural heritage list. The decision will probably be made next year.

Starting from the A-Ma Temple, the route heads northeast, passing in turn the Harbour Affairs Bureau Building, Zheng Family Mansion, St. Joseph's Seminary and Chapel, Dom Pedro V Theatre (also known as the Agostinho Theatre), Civic & Municipal Affairs Bureau (previously City Hall Building), Santa Casa da Misericórdia, ruins of St. Paul's Church, Nalakurara Temple, ruins of the old city walls and the Monte Fort, and then turns east to the Guia Fort.

Macao's Name Originates from A-Ma Temple

If these buildings weren't linked in a coherent route, I don't think anyone would choose to walk from the A-Ma Temple to the Monte Fort, let alone to the Guia Fort, which is even further. But it pays to spend at least half a day looking into all the corners along the way. The buildings along the route not only include Chinese temples and large private houses, but also Western-style churches, theatres, multi-storey buildings, old city walls and forts. Their time-span covers four centuries. Following the footprints of Macao's development, and crossing between Eastern and Western cultures, one discovers a record of Portuguese lives in Macao and can trace the spread of Catholicism, as well as the influence of Chinese folk customs on Macao's people.

Now let's go back to when the Portuguese arrived in Macao in the early 16th century. As soon as they landed at the spot where the A-Ma Temple is sited, the Portuguese asked what place it was. But the locals misunderstood, thinking they were being asked the name of the temple. In this way "A-Ma Gau" became the source of Macau, the Portuguese name for the region. In the temple, the images of the gods have seen Macao grow over the ensuing centuries

War of 1894~1895, Zheng retreated to Macao and in this house finished his major work, Wake-up Call for a Prosperous Society. Stressing the necessity for reform, he advocated making the country wealthy through commercial businesses and then protecting those interests with military force. Zheng Guanying's ideas attracted the attention of society of the day, greatly influencing Sun Yat Sen and Mao Zedong. It is hoped Zheng's house, which is rather large, will be opened to visitors next year.

The district where Zheng Guanying lived used to be where the Portuguese gathered and resided in Macao's early period. The area around the Largo do Lilau still retains a somewhat leisurely Portuguese atmosphere, as if one was in a street or lane in Portugal. At the top of the Rua Padre Antonio stands St. Lawrence's Church, dedicated to the Catholic saint of the sea. On either side, stone staircases lead to its front door. This is one of the three largest old churches in Macao, the others being St. Antony's Church and the São Lazaro.

Visitors can go through St. Lawrence's Church to reach a street where another stone staircase leads to the door of a church above. This is the Chapel of St. Joseph's Seminary founded by the Jesuits. It wasn't open to the public in the past, but since the setting up of the historical buildings trail it now welcomes visitors. The chapel is wholly European in style, and among the relics displayed, the most extraordinary is a piece of forearm of the famous Jesuit, St. Francis Xavier, who was the first to carry out Catholic missionary work in Macao.

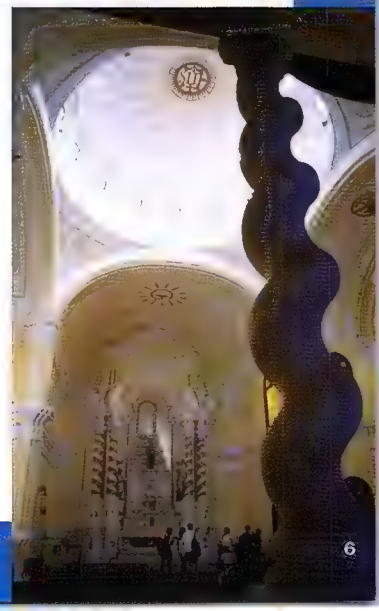
from a small fishing village to a metropolis. But A-Ma (or Tin Hau) has remained the principal goddess for Chinese people in Macao.

Indian Police Once Stationed Here

Walking along the Calcada da Barra for a short way, visitors will see the imposing building of the Harbour Affairs Bureau located at a street corner on the right. This building used to be a barracks for Indians recruited in 1873 to serve as policemen in Macao. From its design and decoration, the Indian flavour is obvious.

Carrying on, you come across a large traditional Chinese house on the left. The Zneng Family Mansion was owned by Zheng Guanying, a famous thinker and entrepreneur in modern China. In the Sino-Japanese

1. The Rua de S. Paulo leading to the ruins of St. Paul's Church is always crowded with people
2. The ruins of St. Paul's Church witness the mix of Eastern and Western cultures
3. A-Ma Temple is where the Portuguese landed in Macao in the first half of the 16th century
4. The Harbour Affairs Bureau in the Calcada da Barra is dubbed the "Great Wall". The building used to be the barracks of Indians recruited as policemen in Macao
5. The Zheng Family Mansion where Zheng Guanying once lived, is in an area of early Portuguese settlement
6. The Chapel of St. Joseph's Seminary boasts an exotic European atmosphere



Earliest Western-Style Theatre in China

The Largo S. Agostinho used to be where the Portuguese entertained themselves. The Grecian-style Dom Pedro V Theatre built there was used to stage dramas, music and show films. It was the first western-style theatre in Macao, and even in China. Nearby stand the old St Augustine's Church, also known as the Longgao Temple, and the Sr. Robert Ho Tung Library rebuilt from Sr. Robert Ho Tung's luxurious house. Both are typical European buildings.

It takes only a few minutes to walk from the Largo S. Agostinho down through the Calcada do Tronco Velho to the central square, Largo do Senado. From the old days to modern times this area has been the centre of Macao. The square is paved with Portuguese wave-patterned stones. Around it are such celebrated buildings as the Civic & Municipal Affairs Bureau, Central Post Office, Santa Casa da Misericórdia and St. Dominic's Church (also known as Rua de S. Domingos). All are built in a late 19th century southern European style, illustrating that western architecture has taken root in Macao.

From the church runs the narrow Rua da Palha, giving access to Tai Sam Pa Street. At the far end, the ruins of St. Paul's Church tower above a wide stone staircase. This facade of the church is all that survived a fire. The ruins have stood there for more than 300 years, and the many undamaged carvings on the wall impress people with the power of Western religious art. The Catholic art museum and tombs inside the ruins also offer insights into Catholicism's early history in the East.

At the left behind the ruins of St. Paul's Church stands the Nalakurara Temple, built according to a traditional Chinese tale. The temple looks ordinary enough but its location is impressive in an area where Catholicism predominated and proves different faiths can peacefully exist in Macao. The ruined city walls nearby are the only remains of the defences the Portuguese built to protect their Macau.

Forts Standing Firm

Up a hill from Tai Sam Pa, visitors reach the Monte Fort from where one can see panoramic views. Of the ten forts built during the history of Macao, this was the most important as it once played a key role in repelling a Dutch invasion in 1622. The pillboxes and iron cannons remain the same as in those times. The newly built Macao Museum shows how the city looked both then and now, as well as revealing the diplomatic history between China and Portugal.

The Guia Fort is the one on the summit of Guia Hill (Colina da Guia), the highest point on the Macao peninsula. The first of its kind in the Far East, the lighthouse at the fort has worked for nearly 140 years and is still in use for navigation.

There are actually more than 12 famous buildings along this route; but some of them are similar and therefore not individually listed in the application for world cultural heritage listing. Macao's group of historical buildings topped China's application list of valuable relics to the United Nations. That shows how much value the central government places on Macao's claim. If the application is approved, this group of buildings will be China's first to gain world cultural heritage status.

Translated by Huang Deyuan

1. The Dom Pedro V Theatre (Agostinho Theatre) was built in 1859, the earliest western-style theatre in China
2. On the second floor of the Civic & Municipal Affairs Bureau is a library of classic elegance
3. The Largo do Senado has been the centre of Macao since the very beginning of the city, surrounded by famous 19th century southern European-style buildings
4. The Nalakurara Temple and ruins of the city walls built in 1901 and 1632 respectively
5. The Monte Fort has guarded Macao for many years
6. The lighthouse at the Guia Fort was the first of its kind in the Far

12 Buildings Applied as World Cultural Heritages

Name	Constructed Year	Location
1 A-Ma Temple	1488	Largo do Pagode da Barra
2 Habour Affairs Bureau Building	1874	Calcada da Barra
3 Zheng Family's Grand House	1881	Largo do Lilau
4 Chapel of St. Joseph Seminary	1758	San Pa Zai Street
5 Dom Pedro V Theatre	1859	Largo S. Agostinho
6 Civic & Municipal Affairs Bureau	1784	Largo do Senado
7 Santa Casa da Miseric'ordia	18th century	Largo do Senado
8 Ruins of St. Paul's Church	1637	Potestant Memorial Square
9 Nalakurara Temple	1901	Left behind ruins of St. Paul's Churc
10 Ruins of City Walls	1632	Left of ruins of St. Paul's Church
11 Monte Fort	1626	Summit of Monte Fort Hill
12 Guia Fort	1638	Summit of Guia Hill

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Travel Tips

Transport (Out and In)

Regular ferries to Macao Ferry Terminal are available at the Hong Kong-Macao Ferry Terminal of Sheung Wan, Hong Kong. These ferries provide 24 hours TurboJet and Catamaran services. The intervals between every two ferries are 15 to 30 minutes, and the journey takes one hour or so. Economic ticket prices from Hong Kong to Macao: HK$130 (weekdays), HK$141 (weekends and holidays), and HK$161 (night services from 05:00 to 18:00); and economic ticket prices from Macao to Hong Kong: HK$131 (weekdays), HK$142 (weekends and holidays), and HK$162 (night services from 05:00 to 18:00). Seniors (at or above 60) and children (at or below 12) can enjoy HK$15 off tickets, and an infant above one year old needs a ticket. For detailed ferry information, a traveller can call at (852) 2859 3333 (Hong Kong) or (853) 790 7039 (Macao), or refer to http://www.turbojet.com.hk.

Travellers can also take ships to Macao at the China Ferry Terminal of Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon. The New World First Ferry Services Limited has brand new catamarans to Macao, and the shifts set out every other half an hour to one hour from 08:00 to 21:00. The trips take 60 to 75 minutes, which depend on the types of ships. The tickets are priced at HK$113 (Monday to Friday), HK$134 (weekends and public holidays), and HK$154 (night services from 18:00 on). The return tickets from Macao are charged the same as those for the out trips. This company has also offered a kind of "Macao-through" ferry ticket, whose charge is HK$218. For detailed ferry information, travellers can call at 2131 8181, or refer to http://www.nwff.com.hk

Moreover, the Macao Travel and Entertainment Co. Ltd also operates preferential regular ships cruising between Macao and the China Ferry Terminal of Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon. There are nine shits for out trips and eight shifts for return trips each day, and each ticket costs HK$93 no matter if on weekdays, weekends or holidays. All the above charges are inclusive of departure tariffs.

Local Transport of Macao

Buses and taxis are major vehicles in Macao. Stepping out of the Macau Ferry Terminal, a visitor can easily find a bus station and a taxi stop on the right side. There are two bus companies in Macao, which are respectively Macao Bus and Xifuli Bus. The charges for the routes in Penha Peninsula are all MOP$2.5, and the charge from Penha Peninsula to Taipa Island is MOP$3.3, to the urban area of Coloane Island MOP$4, to the Hac Sa Beach of Coloane MOP$5, and to the Macao International Airport MOP$6. Travellers need to prepare some changes before getting aboard before they are not available on the buses. In all the bus stations or stops both Chinese and Portuguese are available to introduce the places the routes pass through. For detailed information, travellers can call at (853) 850060 (Macao Bus) or (853) 271122 (Xinfuli).

There are two types of taxis, one is black with cream-coloured roof) and the other is normal in bright yellow. The charge is MOP$10.00 from flagfall to the first 1.5 km. Then you pay MOP$1 for per 250 metres more and MOP$1 for each minute of tarry. Moreover there is a MOP$3.00 surcharge for each large piece of luggage. There is a MOP$5 surcharge for one to take a taxi from Macao peninsula to Coloane Island, MOP$2 from Penha Peninsula to Coloane, but no extra fares to return from the Outlying lines to Macao. Radio-taxi services are available in Macao, too; and the charges are the same as those for normal taxis. Telephones to call taxis: (853) 519519, (853) 3988800.

Travel Enquiry

Macao Tourism Bureau: G/F, 9 Largo do Senado, Macao. Tel: (853) 315566
Enquiry centre in Hong Kong: Room 336, 3/F, Shun Tak Centre, Sheung Wan, Hong Kong.
Tel: (852) 2857 2287 Website: www.macautourism.gov.mo

Guide to Shoot
The Terraced Fields in Yuanyang

Photos & article by Li Zhicheng

Location: On the road about 5 km away from Amengkong to Niujiaozhai. Camera: Pentax645N Lens: 80mm~160mm F4.5
Aperture: F8 Shutter: 1/8 Exposure measurement mode: focus on centre Slide: Fuji RVP ISO 50

Yuanyang County, south of Ailaoshan Mountain in the Honghe Hani and Yi Autonomous Prefecture in West China's Yunnan Province, has been a favoured site for photographers. The county has more than 13,000 hectares of terraced fields on its mountain ranges, creating unique landscapes which are rarely seen elsewhere. There are seven nationalities: the Hani, Yi, Dai, Miao, Yao, Zhuang, and Han live in the county. If you visit during the right seasons, you will surely be rewarded by beautiful terraced field scenery.

BEST PHOTOGRAPHING SITES

A. Xinjiezhen (Old County Seat), Qingkou Area

Theme: Red duckweeds in terraced fields and Hani culture

Standing 1,500 metres above sea level, Xinjie Town has terraced fields around Jinzhuzhai and Longshuba villages. The best photographing time is in December and January, when the fields are full of red duckweeds. The Qingkou Hani Culture & Tourist Village still preserves the traditional houses of the Hani people and their old agricultural facilities.

B. Bada, Masuzhai, Chashan Scenic Area

Theme: Shooting the evening scene

About 15 km from Xinjie Town, the area owns wide pieces of terraced fields. The paddy fields here look spectacular in the evening when reflecting the sunset glow.

C. Shengcunxiang, Duoyishu Area

Theme: Sea of clouds, sunrise

It's 27 km away from Xinjiezhen and stands 1,900 metres above sea level. Seas of clouds can always be seen here. It is the best place for shooting the sea of clouds and sunrise.

D. Panzhihua, Mengpin Scenic Area

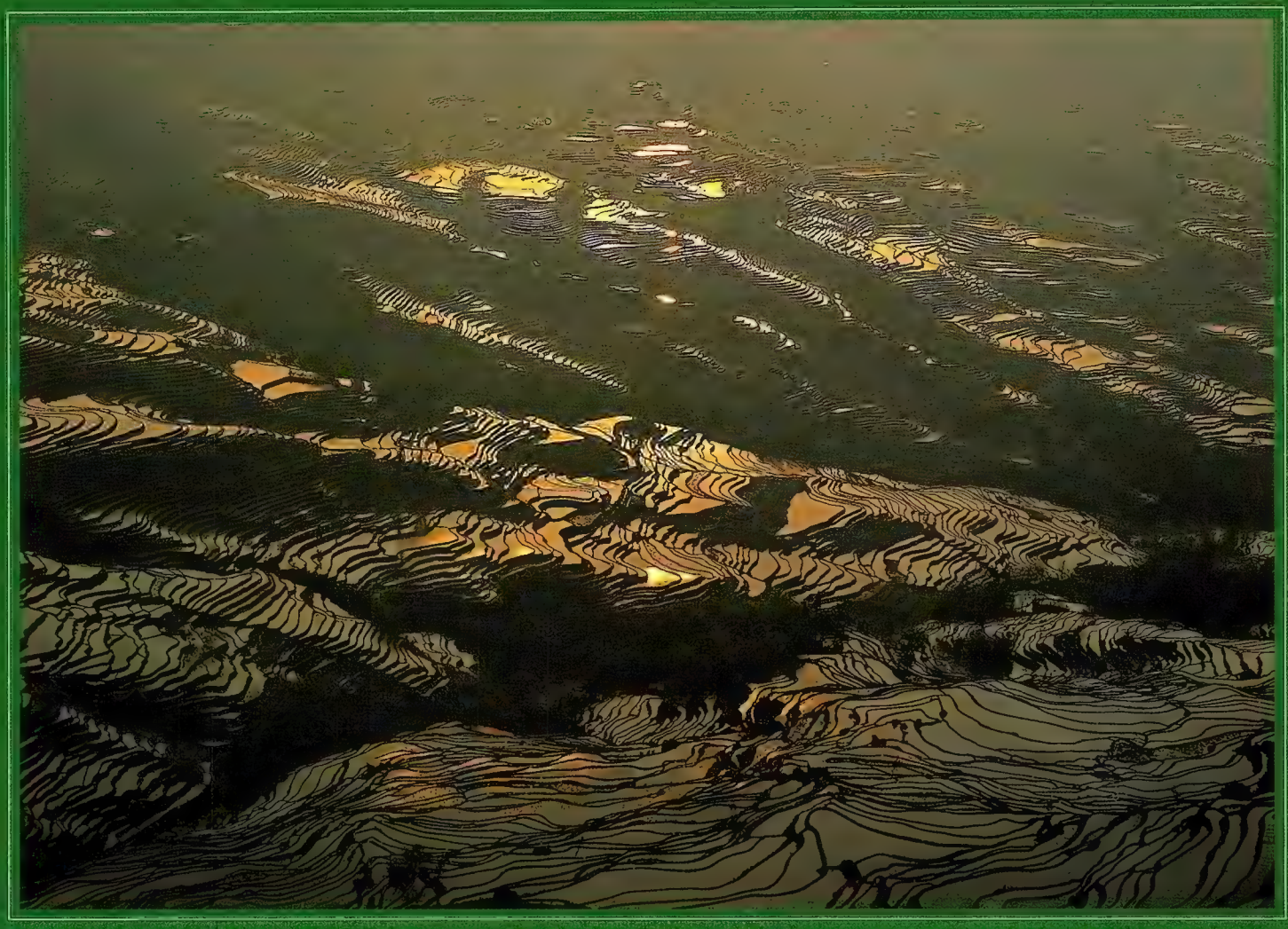
Theme: An extensive area of terraced fields

With a distance of 18 km from Xinjiezhen, the terraced fields in Laohuzui (Tiger's Mouth) are among the most striking of its kind in Yuanyang. Looking down from the view-watching terrace, you will see the biggest live "artistic drawing" of terraced fields in the world. There are also some large terraced fields between Amengkong and Niujianzhai.

Translated by Ping Ting

Location: Going down for about 500 metres along a pathway located left of the Shengcunkou Highway (towards Duoyishu). An ideal place to shoot sunrise.
Camera: Pentax645N Lens: 45mm~85mm F4.5 Aperture: F8
Shutter: 2 seconds Exposure measurement mode: focus on centre
Slide: Fuji RVP ISO 50

Location: Duoyishu. The best place for shooing sunrise.
Camera: Pentax645N Lens: 80mm~160mm F4.5 Aperture: F16 Shutter: 1/2
Exposure measurement mode: Average, -0.7 exposure compensation Slide: Fuji RVP ISO 50



Location: After passing Chashan along the highway, one can see a pathway leading to Bada. You can crane shoot An extensive area of terraced fields by going up the pathway for about 400 metres.
Camera: Pentax645N Lens: 80mm~160mm F4.5 Aperture: F16 Shutter: 1/15 Exposure measurement mode: Average Slide: Fuji RVP ISO 50

Location: Along the highway between Mengpin and Panzhihua.
Camera: Pentax645N Lens: 80mm~160mm F4.5 Aperture: F16 Shutter: 0.7 second
Exposure measurement mode: Average Slide: Fuji RVP ISO 50

Travel & Photographing Tips

Transport:

There are four direct buses from Kunming Nanyao Bus Station to Xinjiezhen (old county seat of Yuanyang) everyday, one leaves at noon and three sleeper buses leave at 7 p.m. Since the terraced fields areas are at least 10 km from the town, tourists are suggested to hire a vehicle (five people at most) on the way. Set off from 5 a.m. and return at 8 p.m. The fees is around 150~200 yuan per day.

Season:

From every January to April, the terraced fields will be filled with water. There is always mist in the morning which creates beautiful scenery. One can shoot the Hani people transplanting rice seedlings in the terraced fields in Mengpin in late April. September is an ideal period to shoot golden terraced fields when the cereals are rape.

Accommodation:

Yuanyang County Hostel: 120 yuan/room; Private hostels in Xinjiezhen: 30 yuan/bed.(public lavatory)

Yak butter tea, zangba, fried yak cheese and the serenity of Buddhism — a taste of Tibet. Where and how can you experience this without going to Tibet? Three days in Minjun Grasslands may not be "Seven Years in Tibet", but this picturesque valley typifies the essence of Zhongdian County, the newly acclaimed "Shangri-La" in Yunnan Province.

A TASTE OF TIBET

Photos & article by Annaxue Yang

Leaving Kunming, the capital of Yunnan Province with David, my French friend and travelling companion, I'm unaware that we're heading for the picturesque Shangri-La County. The magic of this beautiful region weaves its spell and what was planned as a one-week trip to Dali and Lijiang turns into a three-week adventure, including a home-stay on a Tibetan farm south of Zhongdian.

Accept a Tibetan Man's Offer

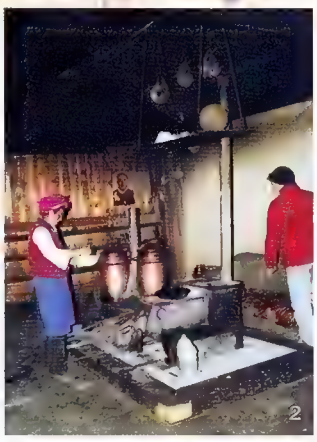
We stay at a guesthouse run by a Tibetan man, Neema and his family in Dali. Even though others have cautioned us about the possibility of bad weather, snow and road closures, we decide to accept his offer to visit a farmland area south of Zhongdian. With only a fleeting moment of apprehension we set out with Neema's brother, Daxi and friend, Piju in a four-wheel drive emblazoned with the sign "Ethnic Culture Protectign" [sic]. We are assured the vehicle has snow chains, and it's a welcome change from the local bused rattling and bumping along.

On the road to Zhongdian we sight the signboard "Minjun Grasslands", the place of our home-stay. In this valley live several families tending their yaks and sheep, waiting for the cold winter to pass before planting any crops. Daxi and Piju only stay long enough to unload the supplies before continuing on their way to Zhongdian.

Sharing her home and her way of life with us, Qili, the Tibetan woman in the first house, is warm, friendly and always smiling as she carries out her farm chores. Her husband is away, working elsewhere,

and her two sons live near their school, only returning home on the weekends. On our arrival we are welcomed with the usual custom of being served butter tea. With it Qili serves the zangba (roasted qingke barley flour). Just as I stuff my mouth full of zangba, Qili starts to explain how to eat it-too late! I open my mouth to speak, only to splutter it everywhere as my gums and teeth become firmly clogged with a gooey mess. Qili and David are rolling with laughter as I endeavour not to choke, laughing with them. Laughter bonds our friendship, words being superfluous in negating the barriers of language.

As Qili prepares and cooks the food she sings lilting Tibetan songs that ring with spiritual gratitude. David and I can't resist the alluring compulsion to join in and she encourages our efforts, just as we do hers to learn some English rhymes. She's fascinated by the way "nose" rolls off her tongue and repeats it over and over as she gently taps hers.



With no electricity or heating we sit huddled close to the fire under the stove and large containers of water, one for cooking, one for bathing and another for wastewater and food scraps, which the pigs will find delicious. Finally we tear ourselves away from the glowing warmth to go to bed, climbing under a mountain of heavy quilts and drift off to sleep lulled by the comforting sounds of sheep softly bleating directly under the floorboards.

Life on the Minjun Grasslands

We awaken rather late to a beautiful day, clear blue sky and frosty white ground crunching underfoot. After the washing up, I apply some face cream to combat the dry conditions, Qili watches closely and I satisfy her curiosity by emptying the contents of my cosmetics bag. She is fascinated at the results of applying mascara. Then she shows me the secret to her lovely smooth shiny complexion-a type of oil, which is a product from bees. We giggle as we attempt to make ourselves beautiful!

Exploring the valley we meet the other families. At the next house lives Qili's sister with her husband and their adult son and two daughters, one of whom has a baby just one month old securely strapped on her back. There are no dropped stitches as the women knit uninterrupted, walking around the farm or standing to exchange smiles

with us. David enjoys a "chat" with the son and admires the tractor, as farmers often do.

An old man invites us into his home, a basic log-cabin style hut, with cardboard packing cases lining the walls to keep some of the cold from blasting through the gaps. It's very dark and smoky inside, but pleasant, as we partake of butter tea and zangba. His grandson enters, dumping a hefty load of firewood from his back onto the floor. I wonder at the strength of this wiry youth who takes us to meet his mother, father and younger brother. Yet again we express our willingness to taste yak butter tea and zangba, and baba (flat bread).

Adorned in Tibetan Wedding Costumes

The next day is busy with butter and cheese making. Milk is stirred, shaken, patted, washed and shaped into large round pats of butter and cheese, which matures in a woven basket hung over the stove. I wasn't keen on the butter and cheese my mother used to make, but now my palate is more accepting.

Later we set off for the wooded slopes to collect firewood, stacking it into the large cane basket Qili slings across her back. Qili refuses David's offer to carry the load, but the passing farmer gladly accepts our efforts to push his overloaded tractor cart up the slope. He acknowledges our efforts with a wave and putt-putts on his way.

Time to relax and we find ourselves being dressed and adorned in traditional wedding costumes, which I struggle to fit over the top of bulky layers I'm wearing-a beautiful, fine organza wrap-style dress with multi-striped apron and feeling very roly-poly, and jolly with my Rudolph-red nose, I post for photos with David looking resplendent in a rich crimson gown trimmed with leopard pattern. Qili adds a bridal-white blouse trimmed in gold, which doesn't quite cover her work clothes.

In the afternoon Qili's two sons, aged seven and nine, arrive home. David joins in with them as they amuse themselves. In a matter of seconds the two boys assemble a swing from a board and rope hung underneath the house. The younger one skilfully manipulates as old, slightly bent tyre rim with a stick as he propels it, tearing round and round the yard without stopping, and challenging David to do better. The dog is affectionately ridden, although sadly he remains on his long chain.

5

Leaving the Family for Zhongdian

Sadly too we must leave Qili, her family and this quiet valley, where a sense of Buddhist serenity and harmony infuses every breath of life, nestled amidst pine-fresh mountains with distant snowy tips. Whispering winds rustle the pine needles, yak and sheep graze contentedly, remnants of dried corn and hay hang on the towering wooden racks and smoke curls lazily from the roof-tops as we walk to the road and wait to hitch a lift to Zhongdian.

Not too long before a long blue transport lorry stops for us. David nimbly climbs over the high frame into the back, but my camera strap catches as I heave myself up. David is yelling at me, with the etiquette of Eliza Doolittle, enhanced with a French accent instead of Cockey. "Hurry! Move your backside!" It's in danger of being sideswiped by a bus hurtling towards us. Collapsing onto the floor with laughter we huddle with our backs against the cabin trying to keep the chilly wind at bay.

Suddenly we must get off the truck, which is no longer heading our way, and we walk some distance to a small town, where we finally catch a bus Shangri-La. We eat at the Tibet Cafe before heading north out of town to the Songtsan Hotel that is home to a family with Tibetan royal ancestry. Nearby is the Songzanlin Monastery, a 300-year-old complex, also known as Lesser Potala Palace in Lhasa.

We weave our way through narrow alleys leading us up steep steps to reach the rooftop of the monastery set high on the hillside. As we view brown fields and majestic indigo mountains, rays of sunshine illuminate the gold and copper silhouettes of stupas, the Wheel of Dharma flanked by deer and other symbols of immortality. Suddenly the sky darkens in contrast to temple walls awash in brilliant white and earthy reds.

With the weather getting colder we must start to make our way south again and miss the wonders of Deqing, the closest town to Tibet, Meili Snow Mountain, Yunnan's highest peak, and the scenic nature reserves of lakes and rivers alongside Tibetan prairies. An early start the next morning sees us scraping the ice from the windscreen of the vehicle that will take us to catch the bus to Baishuitai (White Water Terrace), the place of limestone terraces. This was to be bone rattling, back-jarring trip-but that's another tale!

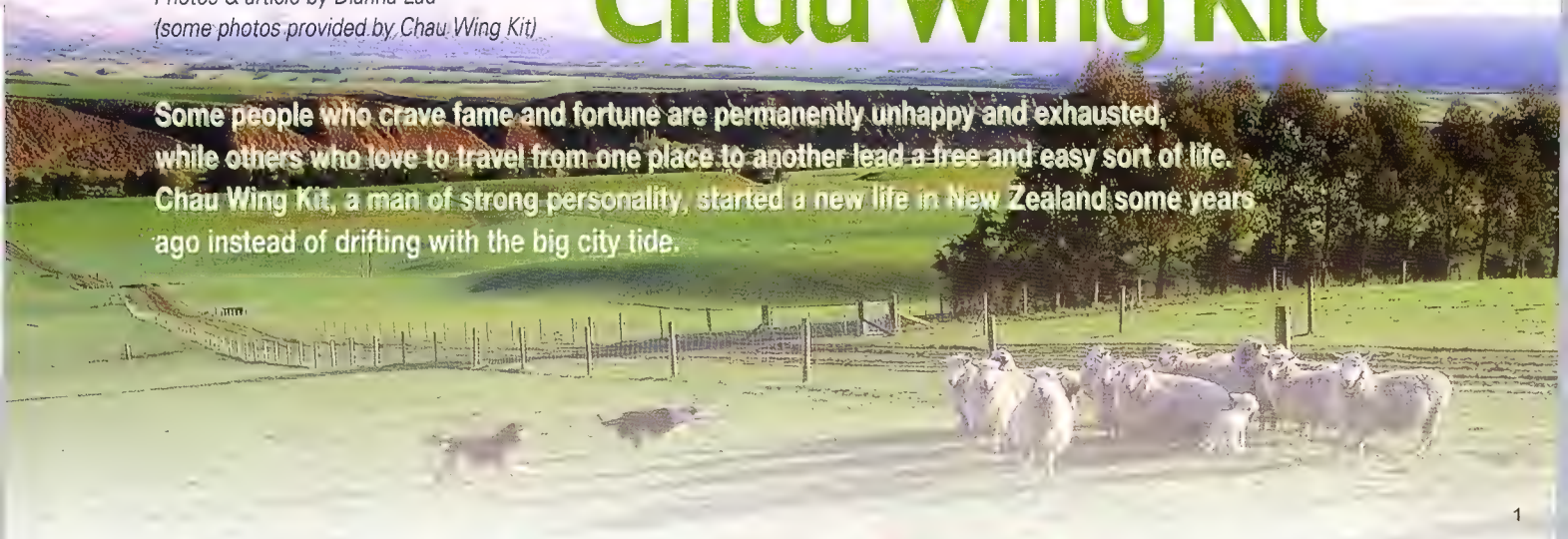
Previous page:
(Small) Three women knit one, purl one... no dropped stitches
(Big) The Shangri-La has become famous thanks to James Hilton's novel, Lost in Horizon

1. **Dark skies above Songzanlin Monastery, the Lesser Potala Palace**
2. **Qili cooking supper atttentively**
3. **Watching Grandfather making yak butter tea**
4. **Farewell to the family at Minjun**
5. **Qili and Anna in wedding costumes**

A Man of Strong Character
Chau Wing Kit

Photos & article by Dianna Lau
(some photos provided by Chau Wing Kit)

Some people who crave fame and fortune are permanently unhappy and exhausted, while others who love to travel from one place to another lead a free and easy sort of life. Chau Wing Kit, a man of strong personality, started a new life in New Zealand some years ago instead of drifting with the big city tide.



1

I met Chau Wing Kit in 1991 when the Philippines volcano Pinatubo erupted out of the blue. The blast expelled clouds of gas and ashes which were blown to Borocay, an island with a small number of tourists. All flights there were suspended and several dozen tourists were stuck on the island. Both Chau Wing Kit and I were among them. Maybe it was fate that brought us together.

2

1. New Zealand — a land of idyllic beauty
2. Mr. Chau Wing Kit

The tourists eventually all dispersed in pursuit of their different careers and I lost contact with Chau Wing Kit.

Twelve years later, I met him again in my magazine's interview room.

Venturing Out into the World

Chau Wing Kit is a well-organized man. After graduating from college, he worked for three years, saving enough money to enable him to wander around the world and make long and gruelling journeys while young. In 1979, he bought a railway ticket that allowed him to visit 15 European countries by train. During the trip, he economized on food and clothing, trying to save every penny. Originally he budgeted for US$15 a day, but finally spent only about eight dollars a day. After returning to Hong Kong, he made an extra trip with the money he had saved — to Australia and New Zealand at the end of 1979. In New Zealand he lived in a friend's home for half a year, enjoying the beautiful scenery and the friendliness of local people to his heart's content. His long visit to New Zealand left a deep impression on him, foreshadowing his later immigration to that country.

Travel Experience Put to Use

For the next three years, Chau Wing Kit continued to travel the world, leaving his footprints in more than 150 countries. Then having achieved that dream, he began to enter another stage of life in a practical way. Between 1984 and 1985, Chau Wing Kit and several travel buffs with the same ideals founded a non-profit-making organization — the International Travel Association. This group aimed to promote do-it-yourself travel, encouraging new tourists, helping them arrange their trips, and providing a forum for travellers to share their experiences. Meanwhile, to reach a wider audience the association compiled and published books on travel including guides written by its members.

"Wherever you go, you should respect and appreciate the local religions and culture. That is what I have learned from my trips to many countries," Chau Wing Kit stressed time and again. "I wouldn't allow the members of my production unit to shoot a telefilm in violation of environmental protection regulations. For instance, when we were shooting a TV program in Jiuzhaigou in Sichuan Province, a world heritage site listed by UNESCO, we would not use our privileges to get into the nature reserve. Particularly since the program was for public release, we must take environmental protection very seriously."

Becoming an Immigrant

In 1988 Chau Wing Kit had the chance to shoot a telefilm in New Zealand. Revisiting his old haunts marked a turning point in his life.

"When shooting a TV program in New Zealand, I met an old friend of mine who is a successful immigrant. After reading my travel guide to New Zealand, she fell in love with this country. When New Zealand made its immigration policy public in 1986, she applied to immigrate there. Finally she was approved. Her experience drove me to move to New Zealand too. I like New Zealand because the people speak mainly English, the prices aren't high, the climate is pleasant, and the environment is beautiful. In addition, the people are simple and honest with a high awareness of environmental protection. It's somewhere I love to live."

"Were you sorry to leave Hong Kong?"

"I'm afraid to say that one of the main reasons why I immigrated to New Zealand is that Hong Kong people had not made any ideological progress for many years. Since I couldn't agree with them or change them, I had no choice but to leave."

Tour Group Leader for New Zealand Tourism Bureau

Chau Wing Kit's expertise in making TV programs and publishing books in Hong Kong, as well as a wealth of travel experiences gathered over many years are his most important assets for making a living in New Zealand.

"What jobs have you had in New Zealand?"

"First of all, I don't like inflexible work. I prefer to do whatever I like. I worked as a professional. One of my jobs was to look after the media and film or TV production units from Southeast Asia, such as the mainland of China, Hong Kong, Taiwan, Singapore, Malaysia, Thailand and other countries. I helped them with their work as a guide or served as an assistant to the production manager. As we were all Asians, we could communicate easily with each other. In addition, I provided them with professional services thanks to my wide experience. I can give deeper and all-round advice on how film and TV production in New Zealand compares with conditions in other countries. I had that job for eight years, and was away from home on business five or six times a year, a number that kept growing."

"Acting as a guide for photographic fans from Hong Kong was my second job. Sometimes I had to be a guide for a group of people, but sometimes just for one person. Once I met a crazy photographer. He came to New Zealand six times within two years. Sometimes he came by himself. He visited any place he wanted to go without considering the expense. Because of him I went to many places I had never been to."

"Why are some photographers so interested in New Zealand?"

"New Zealand is a golden place for photography with changeable scenery. In addition, this country is known for being safe, has delicious food, high-quality accommodation and friendly and kind people. One of my customers told me he was once collecting autumn leaves from a road in a small town, and the cars and horse-drawn vehicles made way for him, and some pedestrians came to help him. All this deeply impressed him. It is also a reason why I like New Zealand. In fact, my job as a group leader and driver for photographers wasn't all that easy. We set out at 4 o'clock in the early morning, looked for the best place for taking pictures of the sunrise, and returned to the hotel after sunset. In summer, the sun sets about 9 o'clock in the evening. We went off in the early morning, not returning till late at night for a whole month. On the way I had to concentrate on driving the bus, without dropping my guard. Fortunately, thanks to my wide experience of leading trips, I was able to keep on high alert all the time."

3. The beautiful scenery in New Zealand attract lots of photographers
4. Boulders on the beach near Dunedin in the South Island

Raising Students' Environmental Awareness

I have found that the more widely travelled a person is, the more concerned they are about environmental protection. Chau Wing Kit is a good example. From his observations, he has found that environmental awareness education in the mainland of China, Hong Kong and Taiwan is far from perfect and has to be improved. He said: "Young students will be the pillars of

society in the future. So we should educate them about environmental protection as soon as possible. New Zealand is an ideal place to practise this."

In 1999 Chau Wing Kit, together with two of his close friends, started to organize environmental awareness tours for Hong Kong students, integrating the principles of environmental awareness with tourism.

1. Shooting the life of a seal
2. Environmental protection tours of students

"What do such environmental awareness tours involve? How did the public respond?"

"They include studying English, physical training, ecological knowledge and even interpersonal relationships. First of all, we let the Hong Kong students attend the same classes alongside New Zealand students, making them communicate with each other in English; then we organize various kinds of activities such as singing, fencing, rock climbing and playing golf to encourage them to cooperate with each other and throw away individualism. We also arrange for the students to live on a farm to observe and learn from real rural life, and take them to inspect landforms and visit a hydropower station to encourage their awareness of environmental issues."

"What are you responsible for?"

"I am mainly in charge of planning itineraries, and my two partners are in charge of promotion and administration respectively, each fully utilising his best skills. We are certainly a 'magic team'."

Encouraging Overseas Chinese to Care for the Environment

Though he is now a New Zealand citizen and has merged happily with the society there, Chau Wing Kit never forgets to promote environmental awareness among overseas Chinese. In 2001 he and seven of his Chinese friends founded the first non-profit-making fund for local Chinese people — the Chinese Environmental Protection Education Trust Fund. The fund organizes environmental protection activities every month, such as planting trees, bird watching, visiting beaches to view the landforms, sponsoring relevant lectures and distributing leaflets.

"What do you do at home for environmental protection, except for organizing these activities?"

"We like to store rainwater for watering plants and washing things. We also have stopped using ordinary plastic garbage bags. Instead, we use bags made of natural raw materials. My family owns a large piece of land. It takes a lot of my time and energy looking after it. I now raise several sheep, which roughly keep the grass down and give me an interest."

We admire those who know how to enjoy life. Let's quote a saying by a leader of the former Soviet Union, which Chau Wing Kit mentioned: "The happiest people in the world are those who can travel; because they must have good health, a steady income and time to spare."

Translated by Kuang Peihua

Notes

On the night before our interview, I reread *Zizhu You Shijie* (literally translated as *DIY World Travel*), which was written by Chau Wing Kit. I recommend the book as a must read before seting off for anyone who intends travelling under their own resources. The travel tips and psychology described in the book over 10 years ago are still very valid today. An article inside titled "True Friend Foreign Friends" moves me every time I read it. Once when Chau Wing Kit arrived in Ecuador from Colombia, a young Colombian man gave him lots of help while going through customs, changing money, finding a suitable hotel, being a guide.... When they said good-bye to each other, the young man's eyes brimmed with tears. He was deeply touched by the young man's sincerity and great enthusiasm. As an ordinary reader, I keep that story in mind constantly. Chau Wing Kit, a man who cherishes old friendships very much, will never forget this young Colombian man.

When interviewing him, I found that Chau Wing Kit treasures not only old friends, but also old things. A small leather bag at his waist was bought 23 years ago in Greece during his first trip.

Readership Survey

China Tourism always appreciates feedback from its readers. In accordance with your suggestions, we have recently added a variety of new columns. Still, we need to know more of your opinions, including criticisms and suggestions. Please take a couple of minutes to complete this questionnaire and return it to us. Thank you!

Please give your evaluation of the stories in this issue and your overall impression of *China Tourism*.

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
A Journey Along the Coast of Liaoning	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Tunbao People in Guizhou	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Enjoying Spas in Zhuhai	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Protecting the Tibetan Antelopes	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Cultural Heritage Walk in Macao	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Others: _____	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

	Excellent	Good	Average	Fair	Poor
Photographs	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Cover	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Articles	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Tips for the Traveller	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑
Art Design	❑	❑	❑	❑	❑

Other Opinions: _____

_____

Name: (Mr./Ms./Mrs.) _____

Address: _____

_____ Country: _____

Age: _____ Occupation: _____ Number of trips to China in the last 5 years: _____

Where (how) did you first see *China Tourism*?

❑ Subscription ❑ Newsstand or bookstore

❑ Hotel Name: _____ ❑ Others _____

Main purpose for reading *China Tourism*?

❑ Planning trips ❑ General interest in China's customs, scenery, etc. ❑ Business

❑ Tourist Trade purposes ❑ Others _____

What do you like most about *China Tourism*?

_____

Are you happy with the factual content of *China Tourism*? ❑ Yes ❑ No

What are your suggestions for improvement?

_____

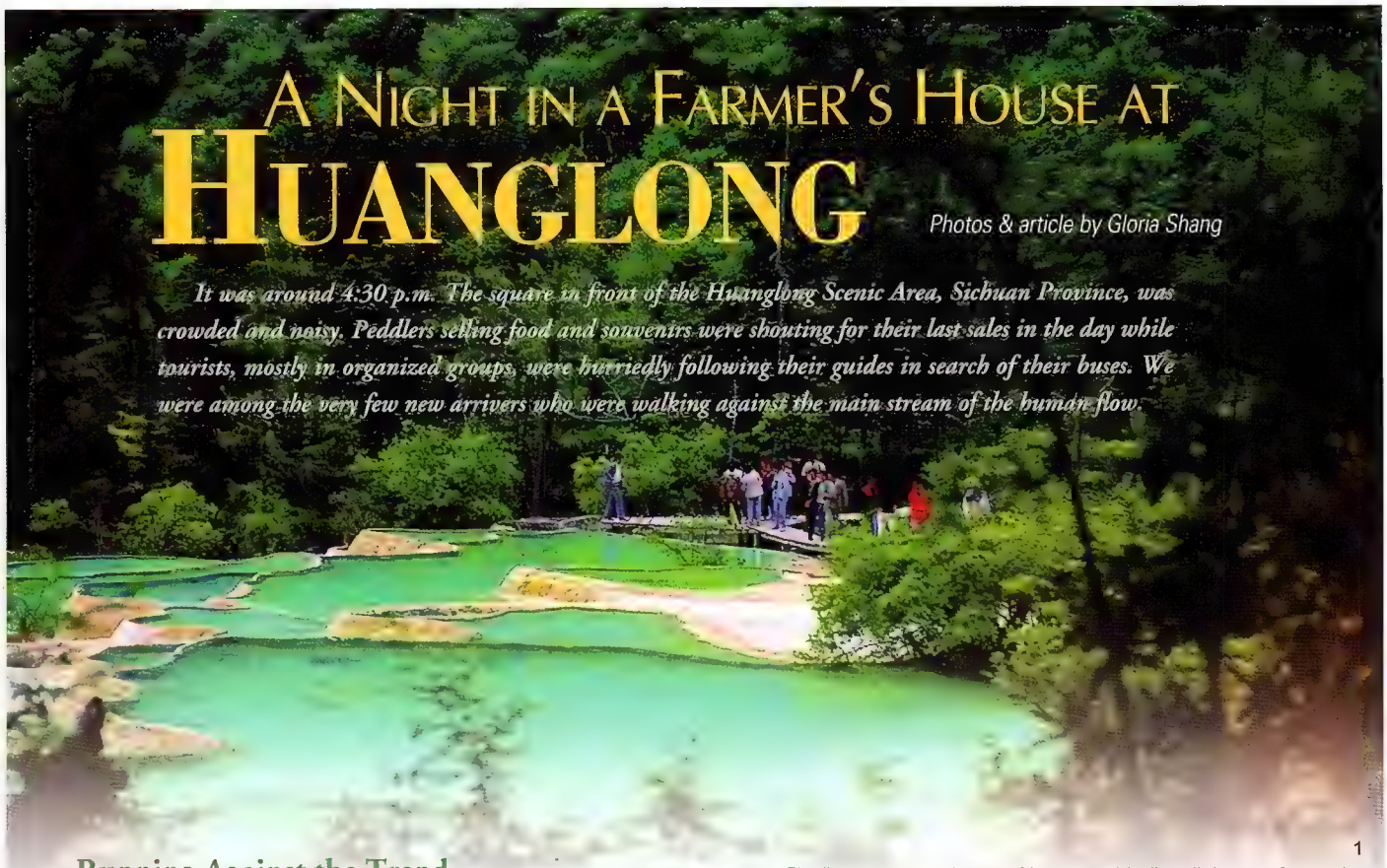
Thank you for taking the time to fill in this questionnaire. It provides us with invaluable feedback which will help us improve *China Tourism* magazine for you.

*Please mail this questionnaire to our office at 24/F, Westlands Centre, 20 Westlands Road, Quarry Bay, Hong Kong, or fax to (852) 2561 8196.

A Night in a Farmer's House at Huanglong

Photos & article by Gloria Shang

It was around 4:30 p.m. The square in front of the Huanglong Scenic Area, Sichuan Province, was crowded and noisy. Peddlers selling food and souvenirs were shouting for their last sales in the day while tourists, mostly in organized groups, were hurriedly following their guides in search of their buses. We were among the very few new arrivers who were walking against the main stream of the human flow.



1

Running Against the Trend

There were several hotels built outside Huanglong. We four, including my husband and two daughters, opened our eyes wide to look for the name our former tour guide once mentioned, but could find it nowhere. Most of the existing hotels marked "full"; the very few exceptions were very expensive.

While I was hesitating, someone patted me on the shoulder from behind. I turned round and saw a woman smiling to me. "Are you looking for a place to stay?" I was shocked by this simple question because my mind was only ready for "yes" if she asked if I wanted some pancakes. "You can stay at my home," she continued. "It is only three *lis* (1.5 km) away." Seeing our interest, she dragged us to the roadside and said, "You wait here and our vehicle will pick you up." Before anyone of us could say a word, or ask a question, or talk about the price, she disappeared in the crowd.

About 20 minutes later, she approached us. Her smile was even brighter. She then led us to a nearby open ground where all kinds of vehicles, broken cars, tractors and horse-drawn carts, were parked. Obviously, we would have no other "car" than a bumper. My heart sank. A thin and shot man of the woman's age jumped down from the driver's seat and shook hands with my husband, introducing himself and the woman (his wife) automatically, sounding very business-like. We then climbed onto the tractor, each finding a corner to squat or sit in the empty, open trunk. The woman but said, "You go ahead. I have to wait until I sell all my pancakes."

Finally, we saw a cluster of houses with dime lights on, from where noises of children's cries and dogs' barks were sent out. After crossing a small bridge spanning on a stream, the tractor stopped at one of the village houses. I asked the driver why it took us so long to travel 1.5 km, intending to protest for their not telling the truth, he laughed dryly and said in an even tone, "My wife is illiterate. She must have made a mistake by mixing up a kilometre and one *li*." So her three lis should have been taken as three kilometres or six *lis*!"

A Family Inn Hidden in the Mountain

After helping us unload our luggage, the host, who now introduced himself as Zhang Hongqin, warmly welcomed us into the house. He turned on the TV in the living room and said we could choose to stay in one of the three guestrooms downstairs. All three rooms were neatly arranged with new beds and very thick blankets. We chose the one with five beds so that we could have an extra bed for our luggage.

2

Zhang's daughter, a first-grade student, was curious

about us and liked to talk to my two grown-up daughters. But there was not much time for her to sit still either watching TV or talking to us, as her father kept giving her various orders — to feed the pigs, to pick up vegetable from the garden, or to clean the lavatory.

A Delicious Supper

At about 7 p.m., Zhang showed us the menu. With his recommendation, we chose three dishes, wild mushrooms, preserved meat cooked with bamboo shoots and stir-fried vegetable, and a soup with vegetable and eggs. While asking how much it cost, Zhang laughed, saying, "Since my wife did not tell you the real distance between Huanglong and my house, I pay you back with a discount." A meal for four cost us only 30 yuan.

Within half an hour, Zhang announced that the soup was ready. The mushrooms were so fresh and the preserved pork was so tasty that we all ate until we were stuffed. Zhang told us that the mushrooms were collected from the mountain standing behind his house.

While we were eating, the hostess returned, happily telling us that she had sold all her 200 pancakes. "This is clean water I just carried back from the spring, with which you can wash yourselves with the hot water in the basins." Turning round, he pointed at a shelter with a huge black bucket set on its roof. "I have built a bathroom with water heated by the sun," he said. "In this season, however, the water is not warm enough and I'm afraid it is too cold to take a bath there." Despite the rusty conditions, we felt very much refreshed after washing away the dust and the tiredness of the day.

More Guests Arrived at Night

The next morning, we heard noises from upstairs and more people than the host's family speaking in the courtyard. We got up and found the inn had received more visitors during the night. While chatting with one another in the courtyard, I saw the sunrays penetrated through the floating mists and spread a golden hue over the mountain and the farmhouses nestled at its foot. I had never seen such a quiet and peaceful scene in my life.

3

The question now in my mind was how we could go back to Huanglong. Then, I heard the claps of Zhang's hands. "Attention, please, we'll set off at eight o'clock. Get on the tractor, everyone!" He now sounded like a commander. So the 11 of us stood tightly packed in the small trunk and it started pumping on the road. The ride seemed much shorter in daylight, but it felt even more nervous when you could see how dangerous the road was. I grasped the edge of the trunk so tightly that when we finally arrived at the entrance to Huanglong, I could not straighten my fingers, meanwhile, I felt the pain on my shoulder, which had been grasped by a man rider standing behind me. When I looked at my husband, I could not help laughing. His back was covered by a layer of white wool fell from the sweater worn by a woman standing behind him. Obviously, no one was less frightened than I was while riding on the road.

Zhang helped us get down from the tractor and shook hands with each of us, saying, "Please come back and stay with us again. I promise to provide you with better living conditions." On hearing this, my eyes became wet. The one-night stay had given us such unusual experiences. I told myself that I would surely come back again. I would see how the little girl is doing in school, taste the qingke pancake made by the hostess and go up the mountain with Zhang to collect wild mushrooms.

4

Notes

- It is easy to hire a taxi outside the entrance of Jiuzhaigou. A trip from Jiuzhaigou to Huanglong usually costs 300 yuan, but you can always negotiate with the driver.
- There is no way to book your lodge at a farmer's house so far, but when you look for such a place to stay, the owners are looking for you too. It will not be difficult to meet one of them at the entrance of Huanglong.

1. Huanglong—a "jade pool on earth" (by Peng Zhenge)
2. The seven-year-old girl is a very helpful hand for her parents
3. A senior couple having their picture taken in the park of Huanglong
4. Mr. Zhang and his wife cooking breakfast for their guests
5. The farmer's house nested at the foot of Huanglong

Mt. Huashan
A World of Snow

Photos & article by Huang Xinli

I have been to Mt. Huashan in all seasons except winter, so have long been trying to make a visit there during snowy weather. Finally, early one snowy morning we boarded a train heading eastwards to Mt. Huashan.

1

2

After buying some food, we began our winter tour of Mt. Huashan. Heavy snow had been falling on the flagstones for some time, but the flakes drifting down from the sky showed no inclination of stopping, and the distant peaks were indistinct through the snow and fog. The snow kept falling, and the piercing mountain winds had totally filled in the very narrow flagstone steps below Qianchichuang (Thousand Feet Stone Pillars), creating the appearance of a solid slope against the mountain. The drifts were waist deep. When I finally got up that steep slope, I found the padded cotton gloves I had been wearing had somehow disappeared. Possibly I lost them in the snow as I fought my way through.

A Four-hour Trek Takes Ten Hours

The snow ahead was becoming thicker and thicker. As we were wondering how long we had been slogging away, a beam of light suddenly shone over our heads. Looking up, we saw a man staring blankly at us. A mountain warden hereabouts, he told us this path had been inaccessible for several days. At 11:10 p.m.,

after a painstaking climb, we finally reached the northern peak. Usually this journey takes only four hours, but today we had toiled for 10 hours through the snow. All of us were exhausted.

We knocked at the door of the Northern Peak Hotel, which was tightly closed against the snowstorm. After washing and drying, we brought out the meat and bread bought below the mountain and ate our fill. The wind roaring wildly in the darkness was so noisy we could hardly sleep. The quilt was also ice cold. I huddled up and wrapped it tightly around me.

While we slept the snowstorm stopped and dawn arrived at last. Peering outside, I was dumbfounded. The mountain looked just like an enormous piece of crystal. I lost no time in waking up my companions. We quickly dressed, dashed outside and climbed up a high platform behind the house. In the east, the orange sun rose easily and serenely above the peaks, just like a father figure, strong but peaceful. It reddened the horizon. The moon in the west hung in the sky like a huge silver plate. A few stars still palely twinkled. All these silhouetted the snow-covered mountain, so beautiful, so white, and so enticing.

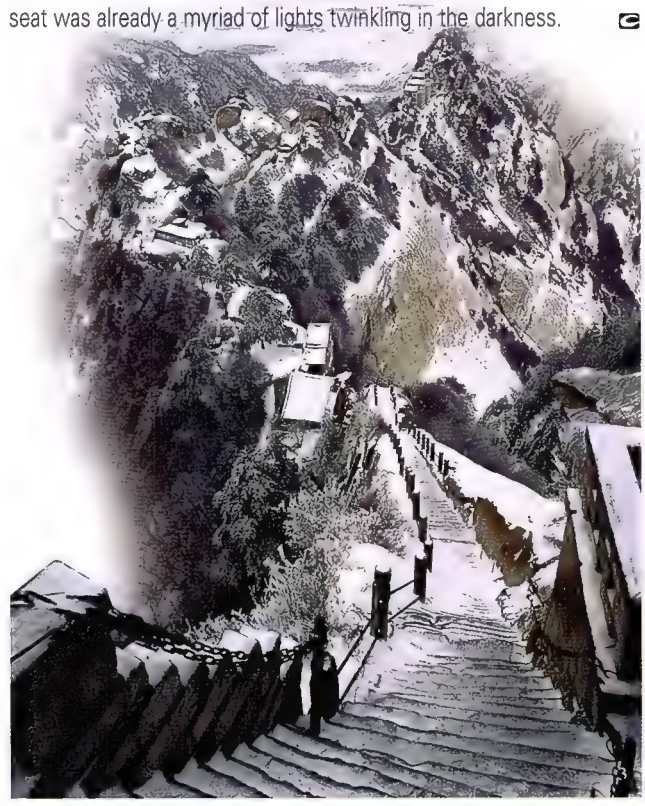
We were in high spirits. Leaving the northern peak, we moved southwards. We climbed up the steep steps, and came all the way to the Canglongling (Blue Dragon Ridge), another barrier on Huashan. The ridge was about 300 metres long, and barely one foot wide. As it was so precipitous, we crossed it even more cautiously.

Soon we reached the foot of the eastern peak. Looking down from the top, one could see only snow-covered treetops and peaks. The steps of the steep path were carved into the rock which was an inseparable part of the mountain. We climbed up hand in hand, like little children crossing a road. What a narrow escape! To our right was an abyss so deep I couldn't see the bottom, only wild clouds. When climbing Mt. Huashan in the snow one must be extremely careful.

Snowflakes on the Message-Delivering Platform

Retracing our steps, we headed for the southern peak and reached the Southern Heaven Entrance at the foot of the peak. At the "Changkong Zhandao", a plank road along a cliff, there was a small platform on the cliff. Above the platform a cave was cut into the cliff. Several words, "Quanzhenyan" were carved there. This was the place where He Zhizhen, a Taoist priest in olden times, carved out a cave and prepared for the next life. Standing at the entrance, I took a handful of snow and threw it out of the cave. Instead of falling, the snow was carried up on a rising updraught, the sight just like a fairy scattering flowers in Buddhist tales. At this, the others tried the same thing one after another, and it was fascinating. As soon as we got back to the Taoist temple, we asked the priests about this strange phenomenon. "At every turn between spring and summer, flocks of swallows fly over here, and then people toss pieces of yellow paper into the sky, which are thought to be messages to the gods. The swallows catch the paper messages in their beaks, flying away with the help of the rising air flows", the priests told us. In this sense this place was just the well-known Message-Delivering Platform.

We climbed up to the southern peak, travelled over the Xiaozi (Dutiful Son) Peak, and reached the western peak. When we arrived there at last, it was almost evening. By this time, the Huayin county seat was already a myriad of lights twinkling in the darkness.



1. Distant view of Xiaqiting (Chess Playing Pavilion) at eastern peak
2. Photographers in Mt. Huashan
3. Overlook Canglongling from the northern peak

Travel Tips

Best Travel Periods: To climb Mt. Huashan in the snow, the optimum period is late November and December. Spring or autumn are also good seasons. The best time in spring is April and May, and October in autumn.

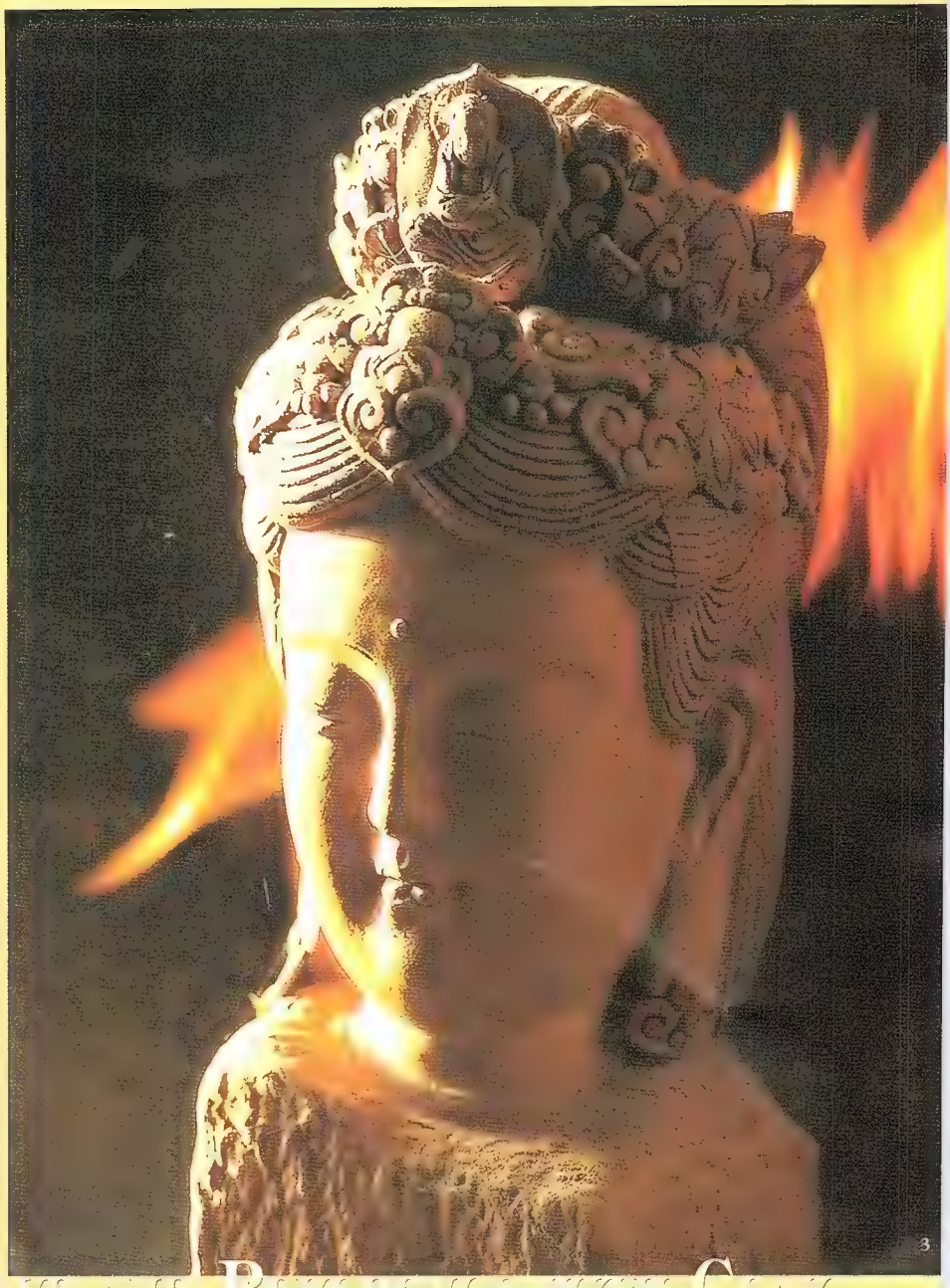
Admission Fees: Mt. Huashan 60 yuan; Xiyue Temple 10 yuan; Yuquan Court 8 yuan; return sightseeing bus 20 yuan; return cable car up the mountain 100 yuan

Accommodation: Hostels and hotels abound near Mt. Huashan. Hostels usually charge 20 yuan per person per night; a standard hotel room costs 80~150 yuan; and a standard room in a star-rated hotel, 200~300 yuan. Accommodation costs on the mountain itself are higher.

Transport: A railway line from Lianyungang Port to Lanzhou and an expressway from Xi'an to Tongguan pass nearby, so transport is very convenient. East of the Xi'an Railway Station Square special tour buses run from Xi'an to Mt Huashan. (Railway ticket: 10 yuan from Xi'an to Mt. Huashan; Medium-sized bus : 15 yuan from Xi'an to Mt. Huashan; and Express bus: 20 yuan from Xi'an to Huashan)

Clothing and Other Gear: In winter, you need a down jacket, thick long woollen underwear, a cotton-padded cap, gloves, scarf, a pair of mountaineering boots, sunglasses, a flashlight, a mountaineering stick, and spare socks.

Precautions: A visit to the mountain involves more than just sightseeing. When descending the mountain, keep a tight hold of the chains, and find a steady foothold for every step. Mt. Huashan is extraordinarily steep, so visitors should pay close attention to safety and not cross any warning barriers.



Mixing Love and Reverence with Clay
The Brothers of Yugong Pottery in Shiwan

Photos & article by Huang Yanhong

Yugong Pottery covers a large area, more like a workshop or a warehouse. At the call that Choi Lan was there, the brothers put their work down and hurried out to meet us. Both are experienced potters aged about 50, the elder brother Zeng Li, and the younger Zeng Peng. As they showed us around the pottery, they told us about themselves.

Childhood Efforts Become Collected Artworks

The pair began to handle clay when still very young, their interest springing from their father who worked as a potter. Certain artists and sculptors often came to their father's place to create brush works or fire ceramics, one of whom was Li Keran, a famous Chinese painter. Being small children, the brothers thought Li Keran's paintings were just lines of black ink. Later they copied the adults by painting and moulding clay just for fun. Their early efforts were quite presentable, but no one took them seriously initially. However before long, some of the workers experienced at firing pottery helped to glaze and fire the boys' pieces. As a result, the two young brothers quickly attracted attention; people said admiringly the various "figures" they created were "full of simple

and elegant childlike innocence". Their father's friends who were given the pieces one by one as mementoes, appreciated them very much. Even now their mother still has some of the work they made aged three or four, but they are no longer casually offered to people as gifts.

Later both brothers joined a fine arts and pottery factory. Thanks to their childhood background in fine arts and their own imaginative artistic creativity, they received further training. The factory soon sent Zeng Li to the Guangzhou Fine Arts Institute where he studied in the sculpture department for a year then worked in a design office after he returned. Zeng Peng enrolled at the Jingde Town Pottery Institute, studying there for four years, and joined the same office as his brother after graduation.

Some years ago, together with a group of folk artists and business people they set up the present Yugong Pottery, a factory specialising in the production of fine arts pottery. The group threw themselves into creating ceramic artworks, boldly allowing their artistic imaginations free rein. Their wares were sold as far away as Beijing and Taiwan.

Miracle of the Guanyin Statue

Three years ago they received a big order — to produce 84 statues of Guanyin (Goddess of Heaven). "That was an opportunity to purify my mind and improve my artistic achievements, as I created the Buddha in my own mind," said Zeng Li.

"The 84 Guanyin statues reflected various portraits and functions which represent the various desires of Buddhists. It is because the world is full of aspiration that we have to create numerous Buddha statues. For a creative artist, definitely it wasn't just a simple matter of making 84 statues, but of creating imagination, space, and eternality. As I formed the first statue from clay, I tried to experience the Buddha's great wisdom and boundless mercy, both physically and spiritually. And it seemed as though my two hands were blessed, mixing all my love and reverence into the clay. As the first statue was finished, I was moved by her beauty and peaceful appearance, and a kind of holy feeling welled from the bottom of my heart."

Wrecked Wood Become Furniture

In terms of creative vision, each brother has his own strong points. Zeng Li features a serious and comely style, with more emphasis on tradition. The artworks he designs have glazes of classic elegance and depth. He especially likes to choose subjects from local traditional subcultures, fairy tales and folklore in Shiwan.

Younger brother Zeng Peng has a more modern aesthetic sense and broader insights. He favours showing lively childlike innocence and elegant taste through modern artistic styles. In terms of sculpture, he does not pursue realism, but the likeness in spirit and presentation of attitudes and potentiality, that is, the excellence between likeness and unlikeness.

Apart from a wealth of pottery, they also create artistic designs, including indoor furnishings and make plaques and furniture. Their furniture especially is thoroughly artistic, fashioned from teak from such Southeast Asian countries as the Philippines. The teak was found from wrecked ships. Though soaked for many years in seawater, the wood has not decayed at all; on the contrary, it is surprisingly hard, so much so ordinary iron nails can't be hammered into it.

No wonder Choi Lan came from so far away to order a large desk as he appreciates what the pottery has to offer. The brothers are also very proud of the furniture made from shipwreck timber, as it's profitable and environmentally friendly. Moreover, they enjoy creating art to their hearts' content.

Translated by Huang Deyuan

1, 2. Younger brother Zeng Peng has fashioned many plaques
3. The brothers believe the key to creating the Guanyin statues lay in imagination, space and eternality
4. A man of insight, Choi Lan (left) came across artworks by the Zeng brothers in Dunhuang and got to know them
5. The elegant statue of Guanyin on the Lotus
6. The use of *binhua* ceramic highlights the statue's unrestrained expression
7. Several hundred statues of Guanyin lined up on the ceramics workshop floor

Tracing the Tujia Ethnic Customs in Three Provinces

Photos & article by Lin Xueqiang

The Wuling Tujia ethnic minority has spread over a wide area in western Hunan Province, Chongqing Municipality, and western Hubei Province. Due to limited time, I set off my one-week-long trip from Jishou County in Hunan, passing related places in a clockrise direction.

Stage 1: Jishou → Xiushan

Train K502 leaves Guangzhou for Huaihua every day at 12:15 p.m. A hard lower berth costs 298 yuan. The train passes through Changsha and Zhangjiajie and arrives in **Jishou** at 7:12 a.m. the next morning. The city of Jishou is the heart of the Tujia-Miao Autonomous Prefecture in western Hunan. From there it is around 143 km to **Xiushan** County's Zhonghe town, a trip which will set you back 32 yuan. On the way you'll pass Huayuan County.

Stage 2: Xiushan → Youyang → Qianjiang → Xianfeng → Laifeng

It takes 70 minutes (and 10 yuan) to go by bus from the Zhonghe Town, the county seat of **Xiushan Tujia-Miao Autonomous County**, to Longtan Ancient Town in **Youyang Tujia-Miao Autonomous County**. The old town of Longtan was first built in 1736 in the Qing Dynasty. Running alongside the Longtan River, the old stone-paved street is now over 200 years old. Square courtyards, or "Siheyuan", with more than 100 years of history are commonplace there.

Zhongduo Town in Youyang is 33 km from Longtan and takes around 30 minutes by bus. The fare is 10 yuan. The best-known tourist attraction in town is Dayou Cave in the city's north. Research by academics and historians confirms the cave as the inspiration for the famous "Peach Blossom Shangri-La" by Tao Yuanming (365–427), a legendary poet.

The 80-km drive from Zhongduo Town to Gongtan takes two hours and costs 25 yuan. The old town of Gongtan dates back some 1,700 years. Situated in the west of Youyang County, the town is just across a river from Gongdu Town in Guizhou Province's Yuanhe County. The river is the famous Wujiang River that originates in the middle of Guizhou. Gongtan Town is a golden port where the Wu meets the Yangtse River from Peiling and connects to Chongqing.

The old streets of Gongtan are mainly inhabited by Tujia people. Around 10 families have made some internal renovations to the old homes but left one or two rooms to rent to tourists. The Yang family inn where the author stayed is a typical example. Staying at the elegant old wooden house for a night, plus two meals cost only 20 yuan-there probably isn't greater value for money elsewhere.

It takes 90 minutes by jet boat from Gongtan Wharf to

Pengshui. Tickets cost 25 yuan. Get a 5-yuan pedicab ride from the wharf to the bus station. The bus to **Qianjiang** costs 20 yuan. The Qianjiang District Government is situated in Lianhe Town and Qianjiang's most famous tourist spot is a lake called Xiao Nanhai (Small South Sea), 40 km out of town. An earthquake and avalanche in 1857 (the sixth year of the Xianfeng period in the Qing Dynasty) created the lake, with about three square kilometres of water. There is a mid-lake island where tourists can stay.

A three-hour trip costing 15 yuan brings you from Qianjiang to **Xianfeng** in Hubei Province. Xianfeng County centre is the town of Gaoleshan. The county falls within the golden tourist triangle of the upper Yangtse. Tourist highlights include the historical site of Tangya Chieftain Empire, the temple of the warrior Zhangfei, the ancestral temple of the Yan family, Tujia stilt houses, Gold Cave, and the water-based scenic area of the Chaoyang Temple.

From Gaoleshan to Xianfeng Town in **Laifeng** County takes two hours and costs 13 yuan. A vast cliff carving, claimed to be the largest of its kind in Hunan, Hubei, and Guizhou provinces as well as Chongqing Municipality, is the "Immortal Buddha Temple Grottoes". If you take the bus from the town bound for the Lijia River, after 10-more minutes you can get off at the State Highway 209, and walk downhill for around five minutes to the Youshui River. Here gondoliers will ferry you to the Buddha Cliffs for a mere 2 yuan. Spectacular scenery is a feature of this stretch of the Youshui River separating Hubei's Laifeng County from Hunan's Longshan County.

Stage 3: Laifeng → Longshan → Yongshun → Zhangjiajie

From **Laifeng** County's Xiangfeng Town to **Longshan** County's Min'an Town takes about 10 minutes and costs 20 yuan. Longshan County has a population of 520,000, of which Tujia and Miao ethnicities make up 57%. It is situated in the eastern end of the Yunnan-Guizhou Highland, and with the Wuling Mountain ranges extending to its boundaries the area is very mountainous. Famous scenic spots and historical sites include the Duhe Scenic Area, the Taiping Mountain Scenic Area, and the volcanic caves.

It takes four hours to go by bus from Min'an to Lingxi Town in **Yongshun** County. The Bu'ermen National Forest Park, in the south of the county, is the starting point for Mengdong River Rafting in the Lesser Three Gorges area. You can raft through the Mengdong River Scenic Area all the way down south to the Wangcun Old Town, bordering with Guzhang County. Before arriving at the Old Town, you will see the waterfalls of Wangcun. Stay in Wangcun Old Town and savour its unique flavour, then head to Maopo nearby for the artistic treasure, the Xizhou Bronze Pillars.

To bus from Lingxi town to **Zhangjiajie** Railway Station requires about three hours and will set you back 15 yuan. At around 3:30 p.m., I arrived at the Zhangjiajie Station. By taking a hot shower at the small hotel next to the station, I felt refreshed and clean after my days of travel. After a brief rest, I had an early dinner at the small restaurant and departed on the 18:18 train bound for Guangzhou, 320 yuan for a lower hard berth. It brought to an end of my Tujia ethnicity journey.

Translated by Cheng Lei

1. **"Immortal Buddha Temple Grottoes" is a famous rock sculpture in Youshui, Laifeng Tujia Autonomous County**
2. **A crowded street in Longtan Ancient Town in Youyang Tujia-Miao Autonomous County**
3. **One can stay overnight in the Yangjia Hostel, a typical stilt house of the Tujia people, with a total of 10 yuan**
4. **The residence of Zhao Shiyan in Longdong Township, Longtan Ancient Town, reflects the architecture of a grand quadrangle**
5. **With a history of 1,700 years, the Longtan Ancient Town located beside Wujiang River boasts lots of hundred-year-old Tujia stilt wooden houses**

Hotels in Liaoning

City	Name	Star	Address	Tel	Fax
Dalian	Furama Hotel	*****	60 Renmin Rd, Dalian	(411) 2630888	(411) 2639128
	Shangri-La Hotel	*****	66 Renmin Rd, Dalian	(411) 2525000	(411) 2525003
	Swissotel Hotel	*****	21 Wuhui Rd, Zhongshan Dist., Dalian	(411) 2303388	(411) 2302266
	Bohai Pearl Hotel	****	8 Victory Square, Zhongshan Dist., Dalian	(411) 2809819	(411) 2804723
	Gloria Plaza Hotel	****	5 Yide Avenue, Zhongshan Dist., Dalian	(411) 2808855	(411) 2808533
	Holiday Inn Dalian	****	18 Shengli Square, Zhongshan Rd, Dalian	(411) 2808888	(411) 2809704
	Int'l Golden Shine Hotel	****	53 Wuwu Rd, Zhongshan Dist., Dalian	(411) 2727999	(411) 2719851
	International Hotel	****	9 Renmin Rd, Dalian	(411) 2638238	(411) 2630008
	Regent Hotel	****	12 Hutan St, Zhongshan Dist., Dalian	(411) 2892811	(411) 2893510
	Sunshine Hotel	***	2 Zhongchang St, Shahekou Dist., Dalian	(411) 4620099	(411) 4620096
	Wanda Int'l Hotel	***	539 Changjiang Rd, Dalian	(411) 3628888	(411) 3639696
Dandong	Dandong Int'l Hotel	***	88 Xin'an St, Dandong	(415) 2137788	(415) 2146644
	Dandongyongli Hotel	***	2 Xianqian St, Dandong	(415) 2134118	(415) 2128390
	Dandong Jiangbin Hotel	**	5 Fangba, Yanjiang Open Area, Dandong	(415) 3153748	(415) 3142835
	Dandong Yalujiang Mansion	**	87 Jiuwei Rd, Dandong	(415) 2125901	(415) 2126180
	Sakura Hotel	**	8 Qijing St, Zhenxing Dist., Dandong	(415) 2136541	(415) 2134141
	Dandong Jiaotong Hotel	*	4 Jinjiang St, Zhenxing Dist., Dandong	(415) 2132777	(415) 2135424
Jinzhou	Jinzhou Mansion Hotel	***	58 Sect. 3, Central St, Jinzhou	(416) 2127428	(416) 2131791
	Xiyuan Hotel Jinzhou	**	9 Hejinxili, Tanghezi, Taihe Dist., Jinzhou	(416) 2583753	(416) 5139439
	Jinzhou Beishan Grand Hotel	*	12 Sect. 3, Beijing Rd, Jinzhou	(416) 4168144	(416) 4166521
Panjin	Tianhe Hotel Panjin	**	Hongqi St, Shuangtaizi Dist., Panjin	(427) 5851860	(427) 5852160
Yingkou	Gangdu Hotel Yingkou	***	North Sect., Tianshan St, E & T Open Area, Yingkou	(417) 6269999	(417) 6269965
	Hualin Hotel Yingkou	**	55 Shifu Rd, Zhanqian Dist., Yingkou	(417) 2826725	(417) 2826724
	Lidi Hotel Yingkou	**	Middle of Changjiang Rd, Bayuquan Dist.,Yingkou	(417) 6256401	(417) 6251949
	Yingkou Liaohe Guest House	*	1 Shifu Rd, Zhanqian Dist., Yingkou	(417) 2992100	(417) 2835568

Flights to and from **Dalian**

Route	Days	Dep.	Arr.	Flight
Beijing – Dalian	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1155	1305	CA1607
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1240	1350	CJ6129
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1700	1815	XW 197
Dalian – Beijing	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1405	1515	CA1608
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1040	1150	CJ6130
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1855	2010	XW 198
Chengdu – Dalian	7	0820	1150	SZ4607
	1 4	0820	1200	SZ4607
	1 4 7	1350	1815	CJ6421
	2 3 5 6	1350	1800	CJ6423
	2 4 6	0830	1210	3U 591
Dalian – Chengdu	7	1230	1615	SZ4608
	1 4	1240	1615	SZ4608
	1 4 7	0835	1255	CJ6422
	2 3 5 6	0835	1255	CJ6424
	2 4 6	1250	1645	3U 592
Fuzhou – Dalian	3 6	1320	1700	CJ6527
	1 3 5	1450	1805	MF8621
	2 4 6 7	1435	1745	MF8623
Dalian – Fuzhou	3 6	0855	1230	CJ6528
	1 3 5	1855	2225	MF8622
	2 4 6 7	1835	2150	MF8624
Hangzhou – Dalian	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	2155	2345	CJ6327
	1 4	1350	1520	F65967
	1 3 5	1635	1805	MF8621
	2 4 6 7	1605	1745	MF8623
Dalian – Hangzhou	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1310	1455	CJ6328
	1 4	2030	2215	F65968
	1 3 5	1855	2045	MF8622
	2 4 6 7	1835	2020	MF8624
Kunming – Dalian	2 6	1030	1450	3Q4615
	2 3 5 7	1515	2010	CJ6425
	6	1655	2140	CJ6427
	1	1030	1450	3Q4617
	5	0950	1430	3Q4617
	1 4	1515	2000	CJ6427
Dalian – Kunming	2 6	1530	2010	3Q4616
	2 3 5 7	0905	1425	CJ6426
	6	1030	1600	CJ6428

Route	Days	Dep.	Arr.	Flight
	1 5	1520	2010	3Q4618
	1 4	0905	1415	CJ6428
Qingdao – Dalian	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1640	1730	CJ6329
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	0835	0915	SC 715
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1920	2000	SC 725
Dalian – Qingdao	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	0855	0950	CJ6330
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	0955	1100	SC 716
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	2030	2110	SC 726
Shanghai (Pudong) – Dalian	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1725	1900	CJ6542
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1050	1220	CJ6521
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1455	1635	CJ6523
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	0840	1005	FM 571
Dalian – Shanghai (Pudong)	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	0820	0955	CJ6522
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1220	1350	CJ6524
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1000	1140	CJ6543
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1110	1305	FM 572
Shenzhen – Dalian	2 3 5 6 7	0905	1255	CZ3653
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1850	2345	CJ6327
Dalian – Shenzhen	2 3 5 6 7	1345	1810	CZ3654
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1310	1755	CJ6328
Wuhan – Dalian	1 4 5 7	1850	2050	CJ6377
	2 5	1655	1900	CJ6335
	4 7	1140	1255	HU7511
	1 3 6	1110	1300	ZH 829
	4	0805	1000	WU 605
	1 2 5 7	1400	1610	WU 617
Dalian – Wuhan	1 4 5 7	1540	1800	CJ6378
	2 5	0850	1105	CJ6336
	4 7	1340	1420	HU7512
	1 3 6	1340	1550	ZH 830
	4	1420	1620	WU 606
	1 2 5 7	1700	1910	WU 618
Yanji – Dalian	2 5 7	1850	2130	CJ6621
	1 3 4 6	1930	2210	CJ6621
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	2000	2130	CJ6623
Dalian – Yanji	2 5 7	1530	1810	CJ6622
	1 3 4 6	1610	1850	CJ6622
	1 2 3 4 5 6 7	1750	1920	CJ6624

Flights to and from **Dandong**

Route	Days	Dep.	Arr.	Flight
Beijing – Dandong	2 4 6	1225	1345	3U 605
Dandong – Beijing	2 4 6	1425	1545	3U 606
Chengdu – Dandong	2 4 6	0930	1345	3U 605
Dandong – Chengdu	2 4 6	1425	1935	3U 606
Sanya – Dandong	2 4 6	0800	1500	CJ6755

Route	Days	Dep.	Arr.	Flight
Dandong – Sanya	2 4 6	1550	2325	CJ6756
Shanghai – Dandong	2 4 6	1305	1500	CJ6755
Dandong – Shanghai	2 4 6	1550	1800	CJ6756
Shenzhen – Dandong	2 4 6	1000	1500	CJ6755
Dandong – Shenzhen	2 4 6	1550	2120	CJ6756

** For reference only.*

Airline codes:

CA = Air China
F6 = CNAC-Zhejiang Airlines
SZ = China Southwest Airlines
3U = Sichuan Airlines
CJ = China Northern Airlines
HU = Hainan Airlines Co Ltd
WU = Wuhan Airlines
CZ = China Southern Airlines
MF = Xiamen Airlines Co Ltd
XW = China Xinhua Airlines
FM = Shanghai Airlines
SC = Shandong Airlines
3Q = Yunnan Airlines

Highlights of Issue No. 275

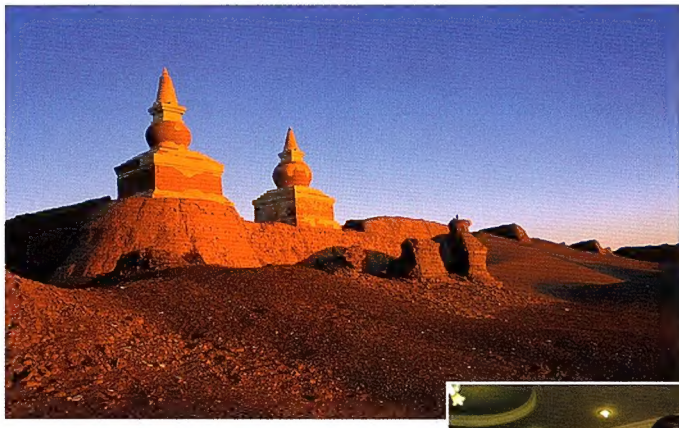
Feature Story:

Tracing a Lesser Known Route of the Silk Road

The Silk Road in fact consists of more than one route. In the next issue's Feature Story, we offer you a lesser known version-along which Emperor Yangdi in the Sui Dynasty (581—618) led an army of 100,000 soldiers during an expedition to West China in ancient times.

Starting from Xi'an in Shaanxi Province, our journey takes us into Gansu Province passing through Tianshui, Longxi, and Linxia. It continues across the Yellow River, past a series of ancient post stops, the perilous Mt. Daban, and a boundless sea of rape flowers. It ends at Zhangye, a stop on the major route of the Silk Road in the Hexi Corridor.

The striking scenery and unique folk cultures encountered en route seem more authentic than at the better known Silk Road sites.



On the Way: Penetrating Heicheng

Heichen in western Inner Mongolia was a border city during the Western Xia Dynasty (1038—1227), but was invaded by outsiders in 1372. Due to its difficult climate and sandstorm erosion, the city gradually died and was bypassed for several hundred years. Today, however, the legend of Heicheng arouses the concern and wonder of scholars, photographers and visitors.

Profile: Choi Lan

How many people manage to turn their interests into a career? Choi Lan did. Originally a Hong Kong film-maker, he has since become a well-known professional traveller, diner, and writer in Southeast Asia. His travel experiences and attitudes to life have influenced lots of readers and fans.

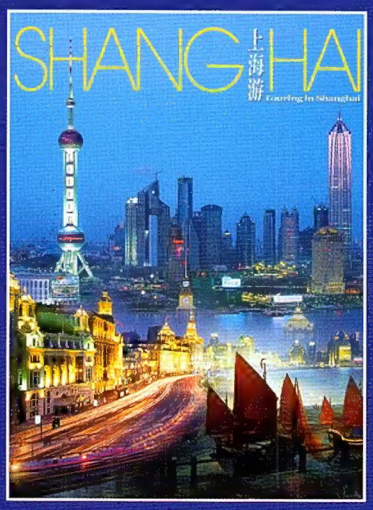
Landscapes: Climbing Jade Mountain

At an altitude of 3,952 metres, Yushan, or Jade Mountain, is the highest mountain in northeast Asia. Being under-equipped, our correspondent tries to climb Jade Mountain in midsummer. He describes his adventures in the next Nature column.

Discoveries: Sacrificial Guzang Festival of the Miaos

The Guzang (Bull-Slaughtering) Festival held every 13 years is the most mysterious traditional ceremony of the Miaos in Guizhou Province. The locals follow strict procedures and kill tens of bulls, in which they pay tribute the bull's souls to their ancestors. Our correspondent penetrates deep in the Jiaqu Stockade, a typical Miao village located in Moon Hill, and shares his sees and hears with you.

BEST SELLER



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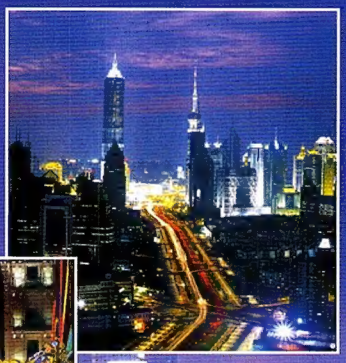

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